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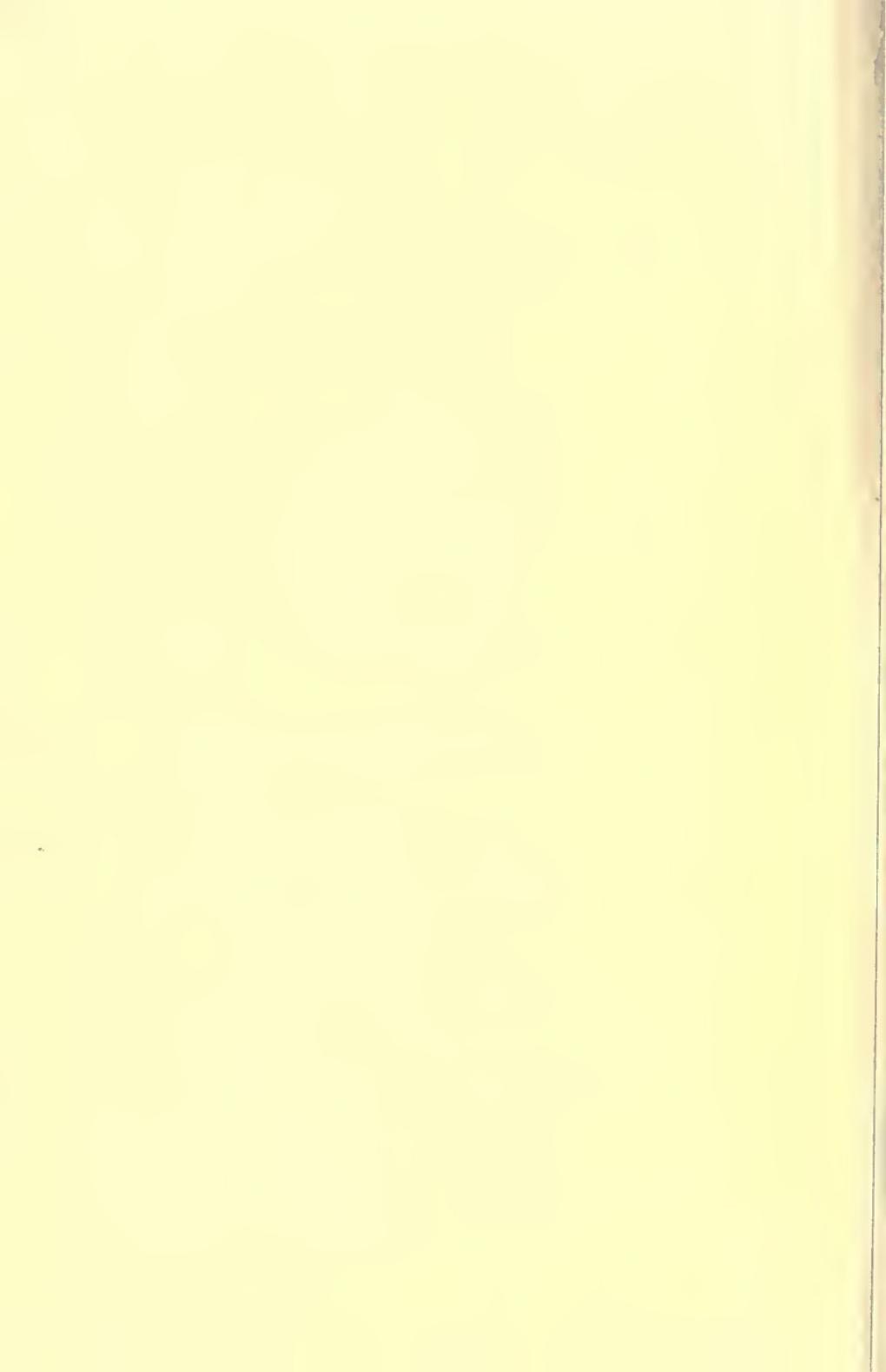
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CRITICISMS.





C R I T I C I S M S .

BY THE

REV. JOHN W. LESTER, B.A.

Incumbent of Ashton Hayes, Cheshire.

"The world of nature, on which but now I gazed with wonder and admiration, sinks before me. With all its abounding life and order and bounteous increase, it is but the curtain which hides one infinitely more perfect—the germ from which that other shall develope itself. My faith pierces through this veil, and broods over and animates this germ. It sees, indeed, nothing distinctly; but it expects more than it can conceive, more than it will ever be able to conceive, until time shall be no more."—FICHTE.

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D E D I C A T E D
TO
T H E R E V . J . W R I G H T ,
V I C A R O F M A L V E R N ,
E T C . , E T C . ,
W I T H T H E H I G H E S T S E N T I M E N T S
O F
R E S P E C T A N D G R A T I T U D E ,
B Y
T H E A U T H O R .

P R E F A C E.

THERE is a time when the soft, dream-like glory of our being is to be foregone, and those scenes of exquisite beauty, and those hymns of mellowed sweetness which thrilled us in the world of intellectual loveliness, are to be forgotten in the renewed energies of the spirit, and the deeper feelings of the heart. And ere we pass these enchanting memories by, we cannot choose but linger for awhile over the names and histories of those whose divine harmonies have thus given a more significant meaning to the ever-blessing creation around.

We have to thank poet and painter, and architect, and sculptor. We have oftentimes, indeed, thought we could discern the golden light of heaven radiating and beautifying their works; and sometimes, too, have caught notes of a higher import than they at first expressed. There has been a strange beauty, as if the fairest gleam had fallen

from the better land. And they have taught us to look on nature as a precious thing ; as the embodiment of the Divine idea ; as the symbol of the Everlasting One.

Their names are gathered up in the following volume, either by allusion or by direct criticism. But there are two we would fain speak of here—the magnificent Trench, and the colossal Carlyle ; one of whom reminds us of some gigantic river, now winding its course gently from its limpid spring through sunny meadows covered with the luxuriance of summer, and now sweeping in its more majestic course by the eternal bases of towering mountains, snow-diademed ; now baring its bosom to the boundless heavens, and reflecting in its roll of rushing waters the myriad stars, and now heaving, and swelling, and surging onwards to the desolate ocean ; sometimes dark and dim with pines and firs, and sometimes bright with the light of the blue empyrean : the other, of some tremendous being struggling with mighty power, now standing amid thick darkness, and now beneath the sublime radiance of universal sunlight ; now gazing on the soft witchery of an evening twilight, and now piercing into the blackest scenes of the French Revolution ; now immersed in loftiest

speculations, and now sparkling and beaming with a world's regeneration. A spirit thanks them both —throbs out its fervid gratitude !

The time of which we spake is only in remembrance, and this volume is the only memento. We now have higher aims than the mere expression of literary sentiments ; these trifling sweets we leave for conflict with the prince of darkness ; there is now a sterner work to do. We have plucked a few flowers, sunbeamed, while on our way to the temple of the Holiest, and ever and anon has come a wish that they might not fade. May the desire be realized !

GREAT MALVERN, 1847.



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C.RITICISMS.

HENRY ALFORD.

WE need not complain of halcyon songs and sooth-ing canzonets: it is true that the spirit of the French Revolution threw much of its energy and reckless savageness into our literature, but it ex-tinguished the sickly semblancy and sickly sen-timentalism of a former age, which was worth all the contortions that have since been exhibited in some of our finest writers. The war-cry, the trumpet-blast, and the atheistic scoff that followed, deadened, indeed, for awhile the melody of gentler bards: but the tumult has nearly ceased; it is daily becoming faint and fainter; its echo is all that we hear; the whirlwind has passed, and once again the calm, unruffled heavens are breathing down upon us quietude and peace.

The nineteenth century was ushered in by a pel-lucid strain, so exquisitely soft, and so exquisitely tender, that it lingers yet in the woods and dells, in the happy homes and domestic retreats of Eng-land, as some angelic purifier of all that is nearest and dearest to the heart of man. Scarce had the

sweet cadence of this delicious hymn fallen from the harp of the sainted Cowper, when another pæan to holy love breathed upwards to the Everlasting from the dark green sister-isle ; and from the rugged and romantic Scotland came notes of peace, and Leyden chanted the simple glories of creation ; and the Nottingham youth sang pleasantly of the past, and in a sublimer mood wrote the two last stanzas of the Christiad ; then Grahame walked forth on the quiet Sabbath morning and taught us to love bird, bee, and butterfly, and the solemn service of our church, with its simple beauty and hallowed blessedness, and we were subdued and calmed ; and even the stern and severe Crabbe spake sometimes of joy, and his pictures bore gleams of the coming sunshine ; and in 1792 issued the enchanting music of Memory's all-absorbing power and imperial influence, and from the wilds of Cumberland came majestic symphonies and divine harmonies, liquid as the lute, yet grand as the organ's swell ; and there was Coleridge, more bewitching than the spirit of a dream, and in silvery intonations he told us Christabel, and the Rime of the Ancient Mariner, and in more magnificent soundings he rolled up to the blue summit of Mont Blanc, and its graceful flowers, and its sportive goats, and its dark ravines, and its rushing torrents, and its fearful avalanches, and its gloomy pines, and its clear sky, and its rising sun, an anthem of kindling adoration, and in cooings softer than the dove's, he told us how he won his Genevieve ; then were heard low, pensive warblings from the lips of

Bowles, and these immortalized him ; and Atherton, so lofty and towering in his flight, could stoop and sing of undisturbed repose, in tones richer than those which erst fell from the Æolian harp when the breeze floated by, or from Memnon's lyre when the light first dawned on the dim and surging ocean ; and over Lamb's Essays reigned a placid stillness ; and Sotheby could revel for a season in his translation of the pastoral Georgics ; and Moore plucked the rose, and narcissus, and orange-blossom beneath the orient clime ; and in 1799, Campbell's star, so brilliant and unwaning, beamed in the horizon "like to an angel o'er the dying, who die in righteousness ;" and Scott, amid his fair ladies and gallant knights, could yet delight himself in home's unsullied bliss ; and Byron dropt some honeyed lines ; and Shelley some finer and more ethereal eulogiums ; and 1818 beheld Keats dreaming deliciously in his Endymion, Lamia, and Ode to a Nightingale ; and Heber sang the songs of Zion ; and Herbert Knowles, in a country churchyard, looked upwards to the heavens and caught inspiration ; and farther north, Pollok relented and spoke of children and domestic sweets, and burning friendship, and eternal affection ; and out of Ayrshire came the gentle Montgomery, with his chaste and spiritual lyrics, and he whispered in more than Philomela's softness of the twilight hour ; and Leigh Hunt, with all his quaintness, had many a line of native beauty and touching sensibility ; and John Clare could tell us of flowers, and clouds, and streams, and hay-fields, and harvest-homes, and

the bliss of early love ; and Wilson threw into his poetry all the warmth of his open-hearted nature ; and Hemans gave us songs of parental and filial fondness ; and Bernard Barton, in less classical strain, penned his meditations on those charming scenes which meet the eye in every nook and corner of our land, and we felt refreshed with his Address to an Evening Primrose, and his story of Bishop Hubert ; and Procter mingled his fine minstrelsy with the hymn thus swelling upwards to the throne, as he wandered on “the pebbled beach ;” and Milman forgot his stateliness for awhile, and gave us “the merry heart that laughs at care ;” and Croly, so oriental in thought, imagination, and language, could sometimes tune his harp to warble the praise of quiet happiness ; and Landor turned and twined a wreath of familiar flowers, the daisy, the woodbine, and the elder ; and Joanna Baillie spake of the bosom’s tenderest attachments ; and William Knox breathed scriptural simplicity in his Songs of Israel ; and Thomas Pringle, when far off in Afric’s desert region, remembered his fatherland, and the tinkling of its Sabbath bell ; and Elliott depicts the bramble-flower ; and Norton looks on the shades of evening, and as the shadows deepen, recals many a pensive joy and pleasure ; and Caroline Southey sheds a tear over the Pauper’s Death-bed ; and Mary Howitt loves the Mountain Children and the English Churches ; and Hood melts us with his tale of Eugene Aram ; and Tennyson, in fine rolling music, strikes out, “Break, break, break on thy crags, O sea !” and enchains us with

his “Dear mother, Ida, hearken ere I die!” and thrills the life-blood with “I’m to be Queen of the May, mother—I’m to be Queen of the May!” and Hartley Coleridge has not forgotten his illustrious sire; and D. M. Moit gazes back on auld lang syne, and tells us a soothing story; and in Scottish melody Burns sang, and Allan Cunningham, and Hector Macneill, and Robert Tannahill, and John Mayne. Nor can we pass over the Ettrick Shepherd with his beautiful Queen’s Wake, and still more beautiful songs; and Motherwell with his “I’ve wandered east, I’ve wandered west through many a weary way,” and his collection of ballads; and Robert Nicholl, with his High Thoughts of Heaven, worthy a nobler name; and James Hislop, with his majestic Cameronian’s Dream.

And what exquisite things have we not had from Mitford, and Gilpin, and Miller, and Howitt, and Washington Irving, and Macaulay! Gentle “music has been heard in many places,” “fine sounds are floating wild about the earth.” The very air teems with honey sweetness and softest murmurings; and these have been our matin and our vesper hymns!

And he whose name heads our paper has sung a “hymn to the spirit of all beauty.” It is distinguished by grace, delicacy, and simplicity: we cannot listen to its silver strain without being both refined and exalted; it takes possession of us. It was a calm Sabbath evening when we first caught its intonations; the sun was sinking in the west, and tinging the horizon with a golden hue; the

warblings of birds in many a leafy tree rose upwards ; the soft and gentle breeze, laden with the hawthorn and wild rose, swept sweetly by. It was an hour of rich perfumes ; the twilight stole down, giving a soothing dimness^{*} to the objects spread around ; the solemn notes of an old organ mingled with creation's sounds. Such was the holy season in which we knew of Alford. Harken :—

Methinks I can remember, when a shade
 All soft and flow'ry was my couch, and I
 A little naked child, with fair white flesh,
 And wings all gold bedropt ; and o'er my head
 Bright fruits were hanging, and tall, balmy shrubs
 Shed odorous gums around me, and I lay
 Sleeping and waking in that wondrous air,
 Which seemed infused with glory—and each breeze
 Bore, as it wandered by, sweet melodies,
 But whence I knew not : one delight was there,
 Whether of feeling, or of sight, or touch,
 I know not how—which is not on this earth,
 Something all-glorious and all beautiful,
 Of which our language speaketh not, and which
 Flies from the eager graspings of my thought,
 As doth the shade of a forgotten dream.
 All knowledge had I, but I cared not then
 To search into my soul, and draw it thence :
 The blessed creatures that around me played,
 I knew them all, and where there resting was,
 And all their hidden symmetries I knew,
 And how the form is linked unto the soul ;
 I knew it all ; but thought not on it then ;
 I was so happy.

And upon a time,
 I saw an army of bright, beamy shapes,
 Fair-faced, and rosy-cinctured, and gold-winged,
 Approach upon the air ; they came to me ;
 And from a crystal chalice, silver-brimmed,
 Put sparkling potion to my lips, and stood

All round me, in the many blooming shade,
Shedding into the centre where I lay
A mingling of soft light ; and then they sung
Songs of the land they dwelt in ; and the last
Lingereth even till now upon mine ear.

Holy and blest

Be the calm of thy rest,
For thy chamber of sleep
Shall be dark and deep :
They will dig thee a tomb
In the dark, deep womb,
In the warm, dark womb.

Spread ye, spread the dewy mist around him ;
Spread ye, spread, till the thick, dark night surround him—
Till the dark, long night has bound him,
Which bindeth all before their birth
Down upon the nether earth.

The first cloud is beamy and bright,
The next cloud is mellowed in light,
The third cloud is dim to the sight,
And it stretcheth away into gloomy night :
Twine ye, twine the mystic threads around him ;
Twine ye, twine, till the fast, firm fate surround him—
Till the firm, cold fate hath bound him,
Which bindeth all before their birth
Down upon the nether earth.

The first thread is beamy and bright,
The next thread is mellowed in light,
The third thread is dim to the sight,
And it stretcheth away into gloomy night.

Sing ye, sing the spirit song around him ;
Sing ye, sing, till the dull, warm sleep surround him—
Till the warm, damp sleep hath bound him,
Which bindeth all before their birth
Down upon the nether earth.

The first dream is beamy and bright,
The next dream is mellowed in light,
The third dream is dim to the sight,
And it stretcheth away into gloomy night.
Holy and blest

Is the calm of thy rest,
For thy chamber of sleep
Is dark and deep ;
They have dug thee a tomb
In the dark, deep womb,
The warm, dark womb.

Then dimness passed upon me ; and that song
Was sounding o'er me when I woke again
To be a pilgrim on the nether earth.

Twine ye, twine the mystic threads around him ;
Twine ye, twine, till the fast, firm fate surround him—
Till the firm, cold fate hath bound him,
Which bindeth all before their birth
Down upon the nether earth.

How like the ethereal Shelley this is ! there is the same light, aerial spirit, the same high-wrought imagination, the same star-lit web—its music is magnificent.

Our poet appears to us to be one of the happiest of men ; there is no repining, with its sullen discord ; he enjoys those mercies which surround him ; and in a calm, confiding trust he leans on the bosom of the universal Father. This feeling of blessedness pervades every line he has written ; they are all tinctured with the same sweet and quiet colouring.

His longest poem, *The School of the Heart*, is written in blank-verse—the language of immortal gods ; so Young has it and Pollok after him,—and displays great beauty of conception and chasteness of expression. Many are its scenes of sunlit happiness—many its songs of peace ; it breathes an undisturbed and unruffled sweetness—an inviolate and imperishable love of the true and holy ; it is

encircled with the golden glory of a first and faithful attachment.

The poem opens with a fine description of Spring, followed by a liquid memory of the past, uttered in the ear of his beloved, which for sweetness of thought and grace of execution, will find but few equals. It is an April morn ; the bright and beautiful heaven is beaming on them ; the leaves glitter as orient gems in the sunshine ; they sit together on the grassy slope : this the tale of his remembrance :—

Few have lived
As we have lived, unsevered ; our young life
Was but a summer's frolic : we have been
Like two babes passing hand-in-hand along
A sunny bank on flowers—the busy world
Goes on around us, and its multitudes
Pass by me and I look them in the face
But cannot read such meaning, as I read
In this of thine ; and thou, too, dost but move
Among them for a season, but returnest
With a light step and smiles to our old seats,
Our quiet walks, our solitary bower.
Some we love well ; the early presences
That were first round us, and the silvery tones
Of those most far away, and dreamy voices
That sounded all about us at the dawn
Of our young life—these, as the world of things
Sets in upon our being like a tide,
Keep with us and are for ever uppermost.
And some there are, tall, beautiful, and wise,
Whose step is heavenward, and whose souls have past
Out from the nether darkness, and been borne
Into a new and glorious universe,
Who speak of things to come ; but there is that
In thy soft eye and long-accustomed voice
Would win me from them all.

For since our birth,
Our thoughts have flowed together in one stream ;
All through the seasons of our infancy
The same hills rose about us—the same trees,
Now bare, now sprinkled with the tender leaf,
Now thick with full dark foliage—the same church,
Our own dear village church, has seen us pray
In the same seat, with hands clasped side by side,—
And we have sung together ; and have walked,
Full of one thought, along the homeward lane ;
And so were we built upwards for the storm
That on my walls hath fallen unsparingly,
Shattering their frail foundations ; and which thou
Hast yet to look for, but has found the help
Which then I knew not—rest thee firmly there !

This is truly beautiful ; many have been the thoughts recalled by its perusal : the green hills of infancy, crowned by the darksome copse ; the wild, straggling lane, with its hedge-rows sprinkled with woodbine and convolvulus ; the babbling brook murmuring over its pebbly bottom, with its banks fringed with butter-cups, daisies, and forget-me-nots ; the old halls, standing upon their sloping lawns, with their strange traditions and family histories ; the white-washed cottages, trellised with jessamine and rose, seen in the sunlight of evening ; the ancient church, half-covered with ivy, and partly hidden by the venerable yew, come before us in sweet perspective, all awakened by these lines ; and with these scenes return the forms and faces of those we loved in childhood's hour : we remember their kindness, gentleness, and tenderness ; we feel that they cannot come to us—we must go to them.

His feelings, on first leaving home and her he

loved, are exquisitely described. It was morning ; the light had just streaked the horizon ; there was a freshness and coolness in the air : at a wicker-gate they part, and take their last fond look : he journeys onwards. The novelty of the scenes banishes for awhile his thoughts of that hallowed hour. A child played beneath the noon-day sun by some cottage porch : he was thrilled with delight. But listen :—

When first I issued forth into the world,
Well I remember—that unwelcome morn
When we rose long before the accustomed hour,
By the faint taper-light ; and by that gate
We just now swung behind us carelessly,
I gave thee the last kiss ; I travelled on,
Giving my mind up to the world without,
Which poured in strange ideas of strange things,—
New towns, new churches, new inhabitants :—
And ever and anon some happy child
Beneath a rose-trailed porch played as I passed ;
And then the thought of thee swept through my soul,
And made the hot drops stand in either eye.

How different his second journey ! no novelty now ; no new sweets to attract ; the happy child, the rose-trailed porch, the quiet villages, and the busy towns, assuage not his grief.

There was no beauty now,
Of lands new seen—but the same dreary road
Which bore me from thee first. I had no joy
In looking on the ocean ; and full sad,
With inward fretting and unrest, I reached
That steep-built village, on the southern shore.

And turning round, he gazes more tenderly into her face, and says :—

I remember well, one summer's night,
A clear, soft, silver moonlight, thou and I
Sat a full hour together, silently ;
Looking abroad into the pure pale heaven.
Perchance thou hast forgotten : but my arm
Was on thy shoulder, and thy clustering locks
Hung lightly on my hand, and thy clear eye
Glistened beside my forehead : and at length
Thou saidst—" 'Tis time we went to rest ;" and then
We rose and parted for the night : no words
But those were spoken, and we never since
Have told each other of that moment.

How like the feeling of every youthful lover, and what a beautiful picture ! A summer's night—the sweet soft moonlight, the arm fondly laid upon the shoulder, the eye glistening with tenderness, the calm and breathless stillness, the " 'tis time we went to rest," the quiet parting with each other, with bosoms perchance too full and too happy for utterance. What a delicious scene of true and faithful affection ! how unlike the unhallowed attachment of the libertine ; what music in the very silence ! The eye alone speaks, and what language it breathes ! The hour so peaceful, so spiritual, so ethereal. The place of interview and communion, the glorious rolling planet ; their light, the silver crescent and the million stars ; their perfumes, the empurpled flowers. What luxurious moments ! how allied their happiness to the pure and untainted bliss of Paradise. On them the dew seemed to fall more gently, the moon to shed a more radiant brightness, and the stars to glimmer more resplendently.

After a separation, our poet and his fair one meet

again : it is “the leafy month of June,” when the sky is one fine transparent blue, and the roses flower in all their beauty, and the kingcups adorn the grassy meadows, and the elders whiten the hedge-rows, and the gay poppy waves in the corn-fields, and the sound of murmuring bees, and the scent of odoriferous shrubs, and the melody of birds, and the village chimes come ever and anon on the breeze.

Many are the lines addressed to his beloved, all of which are tinged with a delicate beauty ; they contain nothing that can offend the most retiring modesty or the most fastidious taste, while there is everything to gratify the loving soul : they exhibit great elegance of fancy and manly vigour of style. Those who write on this subject are generally so fulsome, that we have more than once determined never more to read any amatory writing ; but Alford is a noble exception ; he is tender and chaste ; and through the whole of these verses there runs a golden vein of sincerity and truth.

There are some spirits who are for ever telling us that this present life is dull, cold, and cheerless ; that little or no real happiness is found below. Of such we would ask, what means the beauty of the outward creation—the magnificence of the midnight heaven—the sublimity of the crashing storm—the seasons, which roll unerringly around,—winter, with its fine frosty mornings and fire-side comforts ; spring, with its buds, and blossoms, and light fresh green ; summer, with its oriental softness and grace ; autumn, with its ripened fruits,

and fading leaves, and solemn, moaning winds? What means the day, ushered in by twilight and the invigorating air, and ere nightfall sinking away into dim and shadowy darkness; the dew that trembles on the early primrose, the calm murmur of the sea when it ripples on the shore, the echo of a distant rill, the sound of falling waters, the perfume of the rose, the odour of bean-fields, the corn waving in the cooling breeze, the flowing streams, the glories of earth and heaven? Speak they no language to man's heart? Have they no tongue; no voice? And the tinkling of the sheep-bell, when Vesper glimmers in the coming shades, the soft music of the village chimes, the swelling anthem, the melody of gentle lyrists, the immortal minstrelsy of greater bards, the love of kinsmen and their salutations, the quiet home, with the holy joy of the mother "when from out its cradled nook she sees her little bud put forth its leaves;" the fond wife with her sunny smile and tender affection, and heroic devotedness, waiting to greet, with hallowed endearments, the husband, after his daily labour; the evening and the morning hymn, the fervent and humble prayer, the thrill of the spirit when it first wakes to love, the deep glance of the eye when the beloved object is near, the throbings we feel when a magnificent roll of music bursts upon the ear, the sweet awakening at dawn after a terrible dream, the golden fleecy clouds, the sunset, and sunrise, the dark mountains stretching skyward, the lakes and deep-sunk dells, the myriad insects that play in the unruffled quietude of even-

ing, the million birds, and the loud and divine harmonies of universal nature—what mean these? Call we these dull, cold, and cheerless? Oh! around man's soul they cast a mighty and gigantic influence, drawing out his energies and his powers. Their everlasting solitudes, and everlasting murmurings, and everlasting loveliness, have breathed out and rolled upwards, and spread onwards a tremendous anthem of tempest sounds and clear, silvery tones; massive, ponderous, indestructible!

Life teems with happiness: he who is content is happy; here lies the secret of earthly bliss; man's happiness is in his own soul; our misfortunes may prove so many sources of divine felicity; it depends on ourselves; we have power to make, power to unmake; hardships cannot shackle the mind, that is free; it can never be imprisoned, never enchained, unless we ourselves forge the fetters. Should affliction come, and woe, and desertion, there is one bosom which fondly beats to ours, and which loves us with an infinite love. Ah! they give a richer and a deeper scent to the domestic affections; they throw a halo of exquisite sunshine on the home of our regard; they breathe into it a more hallowed and a more unutterable blessedness. The family are linked together in a more confiding and tender sensibility; and there is unity of heart and unity of spirit: we may be the most happy whilst the most sorrowful. There is ever some mitigating circumstances—some light from the nether heaven—some delicious accents from above.

And with these opposers of the true and holy,

there is ever the axiom—if, indeed, it be an axiom—that possession cloys: perhaps it is the popular, the pervading opinion; the multitude believe in it; the merchant on change, the student in the study, the noble in his hall, the minister in the pulpit, alike receive it; they seem never to have questioned it: and when we ask any for a proof of its verity, they are astonished, and often confounded. We deny its truth: we do so firmly and conscientiously. Possession does not necessarily cloy: we never have experienced it.

Once a man, overcome with trials and sorrow, looked around on those things which had in the hour of sunshine gladdened and delighted him, and having found no comfort and no satisfaction, he uttered the sentiment that possession cloyed: one and another took it up, until it is now well-nigh the prevailing creed. Away with this empty echoing!

One great argument which seems to confirm this deeply-rooted idea is, that the reality ever disappoints the anticipation. This fault is generally chargeable on ourselves, and not necessarily in the thing itself; we too frequently expect that every delight will flow from one object; this is not fair or reasonable: a flower is calculated to yield one kind of pleasure, and the roll of thunders another; the happiness derived from hearing the soft cadence of the village bell is distinct from that of the loud crashing of sweeping winds; the lute, with its liquid notes floating across some peaceful landscape, from that of the organ's swell along “the dim

cathedral aisles ;" the gently flowing rivulet from the impetuous stream ; whereas we too often imagine that one of these will yield us the enjoyments of the rest ; and when we find our expectations disappointed, we deepen the discordant sound that possession cloys.

Possession does not necessarily cloy. A fine winter scene will produce different feelings in the heart from that of a sweet summer's evening ; and as with nature, so with those books, which are the melodies of nature. There is the blind old man of Scio, and there is the elegant bard of Mantua ; both are pregnant with delight, but not of the same kind. Dante and Petrarch, Spencer and Young, Ben Jonson and Thomson, Hall and Hazlitt, are each distinct and different, but each calculated to give his own peculiar pleasure. We can love them all ; but surely it were vain to expect that each would afford a like gratification. Herein we generally err ; we anticipate that the smooth, polished line will stir us like the clarion's blast ; but is it less to be enjoyed on this account ?—is the rose less beautiful because it is not so slender as the lily of the valley—the violet less graceful because it differs from the hyacinth—the honeysuckle less to be admired because its blossom is not so white and starry as the clematis,—the hawthorn, because it is not streaked with the cerulean tint of the iris—the summer flowers of England, because they are not so luxuriant as those beneath the golden colouring of an Italian evening ?—and is Herrick with his daffodils and daisies to be despised, because in his

love of simple beauty he minds not the grander and sublimer features of the universe?

And in painting, do we grow weary of Claude Lorraine's golden beauty, and Ludovico Caracci's masterly Transfiguration, and Tintoret's wild and extravagant sketches, and Correggio's graceful elegance deepening oftentimes to grandeur, and Parmegiano's simple yet severe style, and Vandycke's soul-breathing portraits, and Murillo's mellowed softness, and Vinci's sublimity in his Last Supper, and Teniers' transparency, and Nicholas Poussin's Paradise and Deluge, and Snyders' magnificent Stag-hunt, and Rembrandt's lively imagination, and Wilson's natural loveliness, and Reynolds' expression, and Gainsborough's exquisite Cottage-girl, and West's striking picture of Death on the Pale Horse, and Blake's terrible and ghastly embodiments, and Michael Angelo's superhuman vastness of thought, and Titian's unrivalled colouring?

And in sculpture, is the eye dimmed by gazing on the fair form of Venus just issuing from the bath, with her beautiful countenance expressive of soft voluptuousness; and the enchanting statue of Niobe with its deep despair and agonizing sorrow; and the Apollo's magnificence; and the Juno with lips sweet as a rosebud; and the Minerva, with head uplifted in serene pensiveness to heaven; and the Laocoön, of which Pliny speaks in terms of the highest eulogium, and which amid its sufferings, breathes out such awful quietude as to still the pulsations of the heart; and the Dying Gladiator, with his broken hopes and solemn gloom depicted so

truly ; and Hercules resting for awhile after having plucked the golden apples in rich Hesperian gardens ; and Polycletus' famous Flora, with her delicate drapery ; and Actæon defending himself against his dogs ; and Myro's celebrated Discobulus ?—and of modern times is it wearying to behold Bacon's classical Narcissus gazing at the semblance of his own fair form in the deep flowing waters, and wishing to gaze for ever ; and Bailey's dreamy slumber in his Sleeping Nymph, and his ideal of exquisite grace and holy chastity in his Eve at the Fountain, so full of delicate touches ; and Behn's eloquent persuasiveness and anxious desire in his Cupid and the Doves ; and Canova's hallowed devotedness of woman and careless indifference of man in his Venus and Adonis ; and the repentance seen in the sunken eye of his Magdalene, as if she had forsaken the world for ever, and knew nothing but the name of her God ; and the muscular sinew and heroic firmness of his Ajax, and the bland sweetness of his Graces, and the mild complacency of his Paris, and the innocent charms of the Infant John, and the manliness and fond beguilment displayed in Mars and Venus, and the soft tenderness and playful affection of Psyche and Cupid ; and Chantrey's Resignation, with eye up-turned to the clear bright sky, giving as it were the human will to the divine, and reposing on the bosom of the Supreme ; and Flaxman's Mercury and Pandora ; the one so light and airy, and the other so perfect in feminine beauty ; and Sievier's blushing Musidora about to bathe in the limpid stream ; and Westmacott's

enchanting Psyche? The oftener we gaze, the deeper our admiration; beauties come out which were unseen before, and associations cling around them: associations weave their unfading chaplet. Perhaps, beheld amid the luxuriant loveliness of the southern landscape, and beneath the purple and golden light of the southern sky, they become the divinity of the scene; they breathe over the spot a deep, hushed stillness, and the charming shapes and forms of creation become in after times woven with the sculptured marble, and we cannot look on the one without recalling the other. Thus we never tire; thus possession does not necessarily cloy; and thus will these noble works of art ever put on a sweeter grace, and exert a more impassioned influence.

And in music, do the romantic beauty of Mozart's *Zauberflöte*, and the spirit-stirring outpouring of his *Don Giovanni*, and the solemnity of his *Requiem*, lose any of their power by too frequently rolling their divine sounds on the ear?—and do we ever tire with hearing Arne's sweet melodies and his fine *Artaxerxes*, and Beethoven's gigantic conceptions uttering their storm-like harmonies, and his ravishing strains of beauty, and his bursts of tremendous passion, and his chastened accents of sorrow; and Weber's richness in *Oberon*, with its strange, unearthly harmony, and the mournful simplicity of his last waltz; and Rossini's Italian airs, and Mendelssohn's sweeping majesty, and Bach's immortal strains, and Crotch's exquisite *Palestine*, and Glück's *Alceste*, and Anselm Faidit's thrilling love-

songs, and Christopher Tye's fine anthem, I will exalt thee O Lord, and Bird's Non nobis Domine, and Gibbon's solemn combinations, and Cavalli's bold expression, and Cesti's graceful Cara e dolce Libertâ, and Salvator Rosa's wild utterances of minstrelsy, resembling the deep gloom of his paintings; and Purcell's Te Deum, second only to Handel's, and his elegant Tell me why, my charming fair; and Corelli's pastoral sweetness, and Tartini's impassioned Sonatas, and Perez's pure southern intonations, and Boyce's pathetic By the waters of Babylon, and his chaste duet, Together let us range the fields; and Danby's Fairest flowers, and Cooke's As now the shade of eve, and Webbe's Swiftly o'er the mountain's brow, and Callcott's unrivalled O snatch me from these tempestuous scenes; and Haydn's immortal canzonets, and his Création, so picturesque of beauty and loveliness, with music lively as the lark's, yet majestic as the surging of the billowy ocean; and Handel's stupendous choruses, and magnificent Dead March.

And in literature, will the melodious line of Izaak Walton and Goldsmith become less soft and less beautiful? And are we ever satiated with Cædmon's Fall of Man, and Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, and Herbert's holy hymns, and Herrick's simple ditties, and Shakspeare's magnificent music, and Sir Philip Sidney's gentle tones, as of Arcadian rills, and Donne's vigorous and penetrating glance, and Giles Fletcher's hallowed theme, and Wither's spiritual emblems, and Browne's sweet pastorals, and Camden's antiquarian research, and Overbury's flowery

scenes, and Jeremy Taylor's richness of thought and profuseness of imagery, and Drummond's chaste love sonnets, chanted far away in the north, and Cowley's lively essays and quiet contentment on the banks of Thames, and Milton's sublimity and oppressive grandeur, and Dryden's stately verse, and Nathaniel Lee's deep gush of tempest-sounds, and Evelyn's thoughts on Forest Trees, and Barrow's fulness, and Baxter's holiness, and Henry More's quaint but expressive conceptions, and Clarendon's renowned history, and Hale's pleasant tracts, and Locke's metaphysical inquiries, and Addison's graceful writings, and Pope's brilliant satire, and Swift's biting language, and Parnell's charming Hermit, and Somerville's Chase, and Steele's humorous and masterly delineations, and Defoe's wondrous tale, and Mandeville's graphic sketches, and Berkeley's high-spun idealisms, and Blair's masculine energy, and Johnson's majestic periods, and Collins' inimitable Ode to the Passions, and Lyttleton's tender monody on the death of his wife, and Gray's exquisite Elegy and storm-like Pindaric sweep, and Mason's classical idioms, and Langhorne's amiable lines and translation of Plutarch's Lives, and Blackstone's immortal Commentaries on his country's laws, and M'Pherson's wild mountain-strains, and Chatterton's songs of days gone by, and Falconer's sea descriptions, and Bruce's delightful pæan to the early spring, and Logan's long-remembered welcome to the cuckoo, and Walton's monument of English poetry, and Beattie's embodiment of his youthful aspirations

and feelings in the charming Minstrel, and Smart's Hymn of David, and Barnard's affecting ballad of Auld Robin Gray, and Gibbon's splendid diction and extensive learning, and Sterne's pathos and moving pity, and Adam Smith's great work on the Wealth of Nations, and Warburton's paradoxes and dogmas, and Lowth's beautiful Hebrew melodies, and Watts' Songs for Childhood, and Burke's exuberant fancy and dazzling paintings, and Chatham's magnificent oratory, and Canning's elegant speeches, and Beckford's fine orientalism, and Hannah More's moral sentiments, and Roscoe's Life of Lorenzo de Medici, and Mackintosh's clear, silvery argument, and Hallam's Constitutional History, and Alison's mellifluous thoughts on Taste, and Chalmers' bursts of eloquence, and Carlyle's massive and colossal works, and Brougham's sarcasms, and Jeffrey's and Macaulay's and Gilfillan's powerful criticisms?—do these cloy?—are they not as redolent with beauty and sweetness, grandeur and sublimity, as when first we turned their page?

The oftener we con over the fourth Georgic, with its hum of bees, its fresh green leaves, its clear bright rills, its transparent pools edged with moss, its serene summer sky, its daffodils and hyacinths, its shady palms, and stately oleasters, and plane-trees, ministering their umbrage to the drinkers; its willows and osiers shadowing themselves in the murmuring stream; its insects which “float amid the liquid noon,” its woodpeckers and other birds, its picture of the old Corycian, equaling in his contentment the wealth of kings, and plucking the

ripened fruits, and chiding the delaying zephyrs, and its exquisite story of Eurydice, the more sweetly does it beam with golden light and scent with delicious odour ; and the sublimity of Æschylus becomes more intense and terrific, and the deep pathos of Euripides more subtle, and the thunders of Demosthenes more sonorous and crashing, and the magnificence of Lucretius more bright and glorious, and the words of the stately Tacitus more pregnant with meaning, and the gracefulness of Sophocles more delicate, and the wild majesty of Homer more lofty and harmonious, and the symmetry of Cicero more perfect, and the flowers of Horace more sunny and lovely, at every fresh perusal of their works ; and Pindar's lines sparkle, and Anacreon's glitter, and Apuleius's glow ever sweetly. Does the possession of them eclipse their glory ?—rather, does it not kindle in them a deeper and a richer beauty, and give a more empurpled tint to their several labours ?—and when cast down and slighted by your fellow-men, do they not win you to them—win you from dulness and gloom to sunshine and everlasting peace ?—win you from doubt and distress to the music-land of heaven ? Possession cloy !—we know not what it means.

And the affections, do they cloy ? When holy, never. The fond youth who, in moments of hallowed love, paints the future home of his blessedness with all its tender endearments and delicious sweets, shall find in after life the delightful reality ; he does not dream in vain ; he cannot picture a happiness too great or a bliss too high : he shall

sit in that quiet abode, and his children shall be about him, and the object of his holiest love shall talk in melodies beautiful as those accents that erst were heard in Paradise ; the reality will shame the fairy hope ; it will be more luscious and more heavenly. What ! does the soft prattle of thy babe ever weary ?—does its blue sparkling eye of confiding truth ever tire ?—does its reposing affection ever annoy ?—are they not more precious every hour ? Does the possession of that child cloy ? And is the trustful tenderness of thy wife less pleasing and less grateful, her anxiety to promote thy comfort, her fond devotedness to thee and thee alone, her daily self-sacrifices to cheer and lead thee on thy path, her inviolate faith, less dear and less invaluable than when, in the morn of manhood, thou didst promise love, honour, and protection for ever ?

That these pall on the taste at seasons is no real objection, since this dissatisfaction is not consequent on possession, but on the state of our minds. There are seasons when we are so debilitated and worn-out, that we become apathetic to everything, and among other objects, to those dearest to our hearts ; but surely we are not so regardless of truth, as to assert that this is the sequence to possession, and not the natural effect of our fallen condition. Possession does not necessarily cloy ; the apathy proceeds from ourselves, and did we not possess those beloved beings, we should feel precisely the same ; but when once again the soul

is buoyant, we return with a deeper love and tenderer regard to those whose lives are linked so closely and so inviolably with our own.

But the wise man looked on all things beneath the sun, and found them to be but “vanity and vexation of spirit.” True. But he sought for that which cannot be found in the earthly creature : he omitted the grand principle of love to God ; he tried all mundane joys apart from this vital energy ; he was without Jehovah ; he knew him not ; the pleasures of this sublunary state were considered only in themselves, unallied with the great moving influence. “Not always can flowers, pearls, poetry, protestations, nor even home in another heart, content the awful soul that dwells in clay :” so these could not satisfy it ; that soul rose higher ; all things faded, perished, and were forgotten ; he had no sublime creed, and hence the recorded sentence, “vanity and vexation.” His design was to lead humanity to the Everlasting ; and in this light all is changed : instead of passing away, we are renewed ; instead of dying, we live ; in the vast “conflux of eternity,” everything is invested with dignity and grace. Once love was thought to be limited to this narrow scene ; but now we know it stretches far beyond ; without Jesus, all our gratifications are vain, but in him they become lasting sweets ; there is no decay ; we progress onwards ; we learn daily some wondrous lesson. With the Christian, therefore, it ill accords to believe in the opinion we have been combating ; he is under a

different government ; the rainbow is around the throne, and in its lovely colours we read the fact that possession does not necessarily cloy.

Our poet next sings a song of eventide and early dawn :—

Evening and Morning—those two ancient names
So linked with childish wonder, when with arm
Fast wound about the neck of one we loved,
Oft questioning, we heard Creation's tale—
Evening and morning ever brought to me
Strange joy ; the birth and funeral of light,
Whether in clear, unclouded majesty
The large sun poured his effluence abroad,
Or the grey clouds rolled silently along,
Dropping their doubtful tokens as they passed ;
Whether above the hills intensely glowed
Bright lines of parting glory in the west,
Or from the veil of faintly-reddened mist
The darkness slow descended on the earth ;
The passing to a state of things all new—
New fears and new enjoyments—this was all
Food for my seeking spirit : I would stand
Upon the jutting hills that overlook
Our level moor, and watch the daylight fade
Along the prospect : now behind the leaves
The golden twinkles of the westering sun
Deepened to richest crimson : now from out
The solemn beech-grove, through the natural aisles
Of pillared trunks, the glory in the west
Shewed like Jehovah's presence-fire, beheld
In olden times above the Mercy-seat
Between the folded wings of Cherubim ;—
I loved to wander, with the evening star
Heading my way, till from the palest speck
Of virgin silver, evermore lit up
With radiance as by spirits ministered,
She seemed a living pool of golden light :
I loved to learn the strange array of shapes
That pass along the circle of the year ;

Some, for the love of ancient lore, I kept ;
And they would call into my fancy's eye
Chaldæan beacons, over the drear sand
Seen faintly from thick-towered Babylon,
Against the sunset—shepherds in the field,
Watching their flocks by night—or shapes of men
And high-necked camels, passing leisurely
Along the starred horizon, where the spice
Swims in the air, in Araby the Blest ;
And some, as Fancy led, I figured forth,
Misliking their old names ; one circlet bright
Gladdens me often, near the northern wain,
Which, with a childish playfulness of choice
That hath not passed away, I loved to call
The crown of glory, by the righteous Judge
Against the day of his appearing, laid
In store for him who fought the fight of faith.

The beauty of the strain steals over us ; memories arise, clad in a soft, golden light ; once again we are seated in the snug parlour, it is the still and quiet hour of evening ; the blinds are drawn, the shutters closed, and the fire stirred ; the taper is brought in ; our mother opens “the big ha’ Bible” at creation’s tale—she reads ! we listen intently ; our little eyes glisten with delight : we arise, we clamber up the knees of that beloved one, and throw our arms around her neck : tenderly she looks down on us ; tenderly we look up to her. Reader, rememberest thou a similar scene ?—if so, think thereon, and heed not if it makes thee “play the woman.”

And when we grew older, how soothing it was to wander up some hill, watching the evening star : the pensive feelings of that hour return upon us. We wondered what could make it shine so brightly,

yet influence us to so much melancholy ; and they told us that it was a better land than ours, that its fields yielded the amaranth and wild olive, that its pure and unfallen beings sang hymns of liquid praise. Then would imaginings come of that home's sweet joys and that home's sweet charms ; and sometimes, too, we fancied that a strain of the immortal song caught our ears, and we would walk faster and listen ; but it was the note of the wood pigeon, or the plaintive warbling of the nightingale ; and when we went to rest, we thought of that star, and it seemed begirt with mystery ; waking or sleeping, it filled all our mind.

How many there are who love the remaining Crosses of our native land ! How sweet, when entering a secluded and quiet village, to behold a fine old cross standing upon a grassy mound, the emblem of our holy faith ; we scarce know of any sight more pleasing. There is a solitariness and loneliness about such mouldering pillars, that while they remind us of our blessed religion, forget not also to teach us the lesson of earthly decay. To the past they belong, and to the past they carry us back ; they breathe into the soul the pensive music of other years : we mingle with our forefathers, with those who once sat in yonder school-house, who worshipped within those grey walls, and knelt at that sacred altar to receive the memorials of Christ's death and Christ's resurrection, and who now sleep in that silent ground ; and we are sad “because they are not.”

Methinks I could have borne to live my days
 When by the path-way side, and in the dells,
 By shading resting-place, or hollow bank
 Where curved the streamlet, or on peeping rock,
 Rose sweetly to the traveller's humble eye
 The Cross in every corner of our land ;
 When from the wooded valleys morn and eve
 Past the low murmur of the angel-bell ;
 Methinks I could have led a peaceful life
 Daily beneath the triple-vaulted roof
 Chanting glad matins, and amidst the glow
 Of mellow evening towards the village-tower
 Pacing my humble way.

There is something very beautiful in the story of Alford's early love; it has a sweetness and a freshness which continually please, a purity and a grace which ever delight. "All men," it is said by Emerson, "feel interested in a lover;" and when that lover is a poet, and touches the harp's melodious strings, one cannot choose but listen :—

Gentlest girl,
 Thou wert a bright creation of my thought
 In earliest childhood—and my seeking soul
 Wandered ill-satisfied, till one blest day
 Thine image passed athwart it—thou wert then
 A young and happy child, sprightly as life ;
 Yet not so bright or beautiful as that
 Mine inward vision ;—but a whispering voice
 Said softly—This is she whom thou didst choose ;
 And thenceforth ever, through the morn of life,
 Thou wert my playmate—thou my only joy,
 Thou my chief sorrow when I saw thee not.—
 And when my daily consciousness of life
 Was born and died—thy name the last went up,
 Thy name the first, before our Heavenly Guide,
 For favour and protection. All the flowers

Whose buds I cherished, and in summer heats
Fed with mock showers, and proudly showed their bloom,
For thee I reared, because all beautiful
And gentle things reminded me of thee :
Yea, and the morning, and the rise of sun,
And the fall of evening, and the starry host,
If aught I loved, I loved because thy name
Sounded about me when I looked on them.

A sweet reminiscence this of faithful love—a gem gained from the beautiful Eden!—it seems surrounded by the delicious breath of Paradise. This affection creates anew the world; the woods waving in the breeze become vocal; the streams pouring along their limpid waters whisper as with a song; the flowers, casting upward their odoriferous perfumes, murmur as with a silver strain; the mountains piercing the deep blue heavens with their “snow-capped” summits, and on which the sun pours down his rays, making them glow as if an emerald or an amethyst burned, resound as with a holy hymn: and the vast rolling ocean, bellowing beneath the twinkling stars and lashing the sea-rocks and the shore, gushes as with an everlasting anthem. Man awakens to a new being—enters into a new life; the imagination sees in all created things some semblance to the object of its regard; a passion has taken possession of his spirit, and sways it with a mighty energy; within its grasp he is all weakness, and yet all powerful—he is a subject, and yet a king; it is a higher state of existence; he is born anew from the nether world: he is exalted above the earth, and yet he loves the earth with a fonder love than heretofore—for once

he feels himself the lord of the universe. Everything has a significance—all is symbolical ; his thoughts, which were formerly confined to some narrow spot, now burst their fetters, and expatiate over the whole scene of vitality. “The height is gained, the mist has fallen ; he stands as in a blooming landscape girt by immensity—a purer sunshine has illuminated all his conceptions ;” he is refined and ennobled ; his pristine dignity is restored ; soul meets soul ; and in some mysterious commingling they love for ever. How it comes to pass we know not ; how it begins, we cannot discover ; it must remain unravelled ; it is not of time, it is of eternity : our sacrifices become purest delights ; our afflictions, holiest joys ; it is a theriac against the injuries and scoffs of the world—a crucible in which the very dregs of bitterness are changed into the nectar of the gods.

Another extract, and we close our notice of this beautiful poem :—

We have been dwellers in a lovely land,
A land of lavish lights and floating shades,
And broad green flats, bordered by woody capes
That lessen ever as they stretch away
Into the distant blue ; a land of hills,
Cloud-gathering ranges, on whose ancient breast
The morning mists repose ; each autumn tide
Deep purple with the heath-bloom ; from whose brow
We might behold the crimson sun go down
Behind the barrier of the western sea :
A land of beautiful and stately fanes,
Aerial temples most magnificent,
Rising with clusters of rich pinnacles
And fretted battlements ; a land of towers,
Where sleeps the music of deep-voiced bells,

Save when in holyday time the joyous air
Ebbs to the welling sound ; and Sabbath morn,
When from a choir of hill-side villages
The peaceful invitation churchward chimes.
So were our souls brought up to love this earth
And feed on natural beauty : and the light
Of our own sunsets, and the mountains blue
That girt around our home, were very parts
Of our young being ; linked with all we knew,
Centres of interest for undying thoughts
And themes of mindful converse. Happy they
Who in the fresh and dawning time of youth
Have dwelt in such a land, tuning their souls
To the deep melodies of Nature's laws,
Heard in the after-time of riper thought,
Reflective on past seasons of delight.

Yes, this is indeed a lovely land ; a land of groves and gardens ; a land of hills and dales ; a land of running brooks and wide curving rivers ; a land of the butterfly and bee ; a land of lordly mansions and princely castles ; a land of secluded villages and bustling towns ; a land of the beautiful church and the magnificent cathedral ; a land of Sabbath bells and soft eventides ; a land of religious freedom and religious truth ! The woodbine cottage, and the ruddy child, and the low sweet parsonage, and the wild heaths and purple mountains, and the gushing torrents, and the dark deep lakes, and the romantic ruins of a former age, are ours, and belong for ever to the land we love.

Man must gaze alone on the vast universe ; he must be its presiding genius ; he must throw around it every colour and every tinge of his inward mind ; he must shape and form it to the thoughts of his own spirit—the priest at creation's altar.

Symbolical, too, of the fair majesty of the Eternal—what grandeur it puts on ! what sublimity ! what serenity ! what quiet ! what fresh and blushing loveliness ! and how sweet its music—sweet, yet having the roll of thunders ! All soul to comprehend it fully—to realize it in all its grace, and truth, and meaning !

Perhaps some of the finest descriptions we have, are those which depict the calmness of universal nature amid the confusion and tumult of man. Billow and surge and roll as he may, still the golden beauty of the morning, and the silver loveliness of the evening, spread themselves over the earth. “The flowers return with the cuckoo in the spring : the daisy fresh looks bright in the sun ; the rainbow still lifts its head above the storm to the eye of infancy or age.”—There may be hurry and noise amongst us, yet creation is one unruffled quietude ; no sound is emitted but the sound of peace ; no voice but the voice of birds, and trees, and rills ; no language but the language of soft, hushed eloquence. Strange this and marvellous ! All is serene above and around ; the stars shine out as before, and the moon glimmers in the ocean.

This striking fact painters and poets have seized. How sweet and spring-scented, for instance, are the last few lines of the second book of the *Aeneid*, which shew us the morning star rising above Mount Ida : the din and bloodshed and flames have passed —the Trojan city is in ruins—the dark night is rolling backwards—dawn streaks the horizon—the dimness fades away—the sun veers upwards, and

the hill-tops are golden with his beams. 'There is relief; man feels it. The break of day, as calm and as silent as ever: it takes no note of a fallen empire: no, it is as fresh and unruffled as when the holy pair erst stood, and lowly bending, hymned their welcome. All so still, all so quiet. The light comes down as usual; the valleys stand out in the bright rays; the forests are radiant with beauty; the hare starts in the thicket as before; the lion roars in the desert; the dove coos in the copse; nature is the same; Priam's imperial throne how darkened!

Ever thus, creation changes and yet changes not; the snow-drop comes out, blooms, and dies; still the sweet, modest floweret lives; it has breathed its consolation into the heart: amid dark, drear winter it unfolded its white petals in silence, but not in vain;—wintry sleet came down, and wintry winds swept by, but they bore not away its beauty. The soul took the emblem; it was a symbol; it has passed away, but in man's spirit it exists; there it has an immortality; tumult was hovering, and night ready to cover as with a huge thunderous cloud, and yet it sprang up and blossomed, as if no harm or danger was near.

This quietude of nature is a semblance of the eternal rest; it whispers to us of the better land. What mysteries entwine this beautiful earth! They speak to our heart; they sing a holy song of the coming paradise; yet its stillness is its most exquisite music.

Our love of this softness and tranquility in crea-

tion is linked with a higher principle than we at first perceive ; it is the doctrine of rest and energy in the future abode. We may behold this idea worked out in the sculptured marble of the ancient world ; so exquisitely chiselled it is, that whilst gazing on the personification of almighty power or superhuman agony, we feel a stillness breathing itself over the soul. There is a serene beauty in each feature ; a soothing quietude : those ancient men felt that rest was the emblem of the celestial realm ; nature deepened this feeling. Amid the stormy scenes of life would they oftentimes look back on the days of infancy, when as open-hearted babes they played beneath the vine, and gathered the orange-blossom, and narcissus, and anemone, or when they nestled themselves in the fond bosoms of their mothers : it was rest then, and lively activity. And oftentimes, too, would they, when casting a glance into the dread unknown, deem that it would be something like the time of childhood and the days of youth ; that over all would reign a delicious and undisturbed repose. Rest to men, storm-beaten, weather-beaten men, would be the elysium of their dreams, the Arcadia of their fondest hopes. And the serene peacefulness of their eventides would confirm the anticipation. At those seasons, every care was laid aside, and they sat with their own beloved ones under the spreading branches of some majestic tree. Rest then would be associated with all their ideas of happiness and unsullied bliss : and we find this to be true ; for when their mighty spirits arose, they gave the

expression of this fact in their immortal works of art.

The heathen philosophers, who taught that the soul was a particle of the Divinity, and that at death it would return, and become again linked to the Supreme, had this idea of rest at bottom. There was a sublime truth in their doctrines ; once with the Deity, and there would be peace profound as the blue of heaven. This union with the Creator was the perfection of happiness. As He was beyond all change and decay, so the soul, when joined again to Him, would likewise be without change and without decay. They felt that there could be no lasting bliss apart from God ; and their hearts told them that in the re-union of the spirit with him, there could alone be unruffled and imperishable joy. Those evening hours in which they meditated in the deep gloom of some umbrageous forest, revealed to them that quietude was the distinguishing feature in the future world. Once and again they felt a principle within which threw a sweet and chastened beauty over the events of life, and over the visible creation : a principle which shaped every tumultuous chaos, and moulded every stormy passion to order and gracefulness ; a principle which beamed on the throbbing soul a soft alabaster light, and soothed and subdued many of its evil desires. From whence came this principle, they could not tell ; suffice for us to know, that it often steered them onwards through the tempestuous ocean to the haven of everlasting rest. Ah ! reader, have you never watched the setting sun

from the home of childhood, and when its departing glories have calmed your bosom, and its fine crimson and golden colouring threw something of their tinge on the flowers beneath your feet, and when, letting your fancy loose, you have called to remembrance the beloved face of parent, and of kinsman, and of friend, and losing yourself among the hallowed associations of the past, and mingling in bygone years, have you not felt a peace and a quietude, deep as the grey of yonder sky, yet profound as the magnificent roll of existence? Then was shadowed forth the eternal rest; and these men, these ancient men, would oftentimes experience the same enchanting influence; and they sang a song of the nether paradise, and its delicious music lingers yet on the ear.

Even their fables discover the same principle. We select one—the story of Psyche and Cupid: how exquisitely it reveals the scriptural fact that the coming heaven consists in love and rest. This doctrine pervades the whole of this sweet tale: how it unfolds the soul's affection for something higher, and loftier, and purer than aught on earth; how it exhibits the spirit's attachment to the everlasting love! Psyche catches a glimpse of the perfect beauty, and she loves once and for ever: but she is earthly, and hence she doubts and mistrusts. The fine sunny radiance which before streamed from heaven becomes darkened: to regain that light, there must be struggles, deep, mighty struggles; there must be faith. Ah! these ancient men knew something of the coming revelation: by struggles,

by faith, by the help of invisible or Almighty powers, by encouragement from above, by starlight in shades, and sunlight in gloom, the soul triumphs. Psyche wins her first and fondest Cupid ; they are for ever united ; the alliance is immaculate ; their home is garlanded by the celestial flowers, and those flowers are love and rest. Is there nothing taught here ? Is there not a divine breathing, and a divine expression ? Union with the God of love, what means it ? Everlasting intimacy with the source of all tenderness, what does it tell ? Is there here no true shadowing of the future ; no breaking in of unseen reality ; no bursting forth of immortal verity ?

Not only do we discern this principle in the work of the sculptor, of poet, and of philosopher, but we think it may be discovered in those vast piles which rear their pinnacles and minarets and cupolas to the fair heavens : these breathe out a tranquil beauty ; there seems to be a deep, soft, spiritual power about them ; the very air around them is hushed to stillness ; when we gaze on their architectural symmetry, we are enchain'd ; we speak not ; words are too grating, they disturb too much the unruffled quietude. It is the same with the simple kirk and the magnificent cathedral : we feel that they possess a potent power ; that power fetters the soul, and yet leaves it freer than before ; we are calmed—it is as if we stood in the presence of a greater intellect ; we are awed ; and it is even so, that stately fane was the conception and the design of the immortal mind. When it first glanced

across the spirit, the architect was gladdened, and he cherished the idea as fondly as a mother cherisheth her first-born. Well may it be so vital with expression, so vocal with language ; it is the creation of the soul ; she formed, and shaped, and moulded it into grace, and then gave it substance and reality. We can touch, we can handle it : there it stands—a monument of what man can do ; it is thought embodied ; it is the imagination clothed. Is it any wonder, then, that we are moved and stirred by its influence ? All these glorious buildings are significant of peace ; one almost feels solitary and alone whilst admiring their beauty, so sweet is the music they whisper.

The Grecian temples, wherever they stand, seem to spread a tranquil softness over creation ; there is a solitude wherever they uprear their graceful columns. They may, indeed, be surrounded by worshippers, but there is yet a sensible stillness ; silence is the presiding divinity : if there are sounds, they are lost in the supreme sense of quietude. That polished temple, with its clear serene sky overhead, and its overhanging palms, is Rest sculptured.

Man's mightiest works are instinct with this doctrine : it matters not whether it be poetry or architecture, painting or sculpture, rest is the characteristic of each and all. Look at Martin's Deluge ; and is it not true that, amid the tremendous dashing of the rain, the surging and billowing of the waters, the cries of infants, the shrieks of men and women, and the awful confusion of the

scene, silence is felt to be the pervading element? One cannot well explain how, among things so opposite, there should issue such calmness; but it is no less real because undivined. Were the Chaos sketched by a master-hand, even from this, with all its jarring noises, and discordant sounds, and crashing thunders, would there breathe forth a stillness and a tranquil quietude.

Why labour we so earnestly in our youth and manhood? why exhaust we our strength and energy in the heyday of our existence? why the sunken eye? why the enfeebled frame? why the pallid cheek? Is it not that when life's shadows deepen, the evening of our days may be passed in the enjoyment of rest? It is not for the gold-god that we toil; no, not for that, not for that! We long after rest; we pray for rest. But remember, it is an active rest; a rest on which may beam affection and constant love. Rest is grateful after hardship; rest is sweet after the beating and raging of the elements; rest is delicious after years of suffering; and when man looks on the fair and beautiful creation, he feels that this, too, is the bliss of heaven.

Ambition may stir the breast of many, and it may seem to be the ruling principle in their struggle for pre-eminence and wealth; but even this is kept alive by the idea of rest. Behind those honours, and far more honourable, arises an abode of peace and contentment. Here they would spend the remainder of their days. It is not rank, it is not station that they want so much; it is this.

Fancy ever calleth up some rural retirement to nerve and sinew the aspiring spirit in his conflict with the world. Have you ever marked the pure blue ether that often gleams through some broken cloud? It is an emblem of the rest he desires.

We have lain in the deep flowery grass which skirted a sylvan stream, and whilst listening to its murmuring waters, and gazing upwards with half-closed eye, have we been wafted as in a sweet and pleasant dream to the land where there is an unruffled calm. Why do we recollect such moments with delight? It is that they spoke to us of rest.

And we may, indeed, trace some knowledge thus gathered from the outward universe, in every bosom. The spirit culleth all the beautiful things of earth, and out of them doth it take such as are in accordance with its own bright anticipation of the future world. Ah, it is a creation bathed in love and quietude. There may the feet stray in orange-groves; there the almond-tree buds, and the cassia flowers, and the clove and basil pour forth their perfumes on every passing breeze; there the cedar, and the pine, and the fir adorn its vales, and the sun looks gloriously down upon its pure and holy inhabitants. Rest is there, and love—rest and love: all is one enchanting stillness—one enchanting silence. There is love, which signifies activity; rest, which signifies happiness: it is a fair and hallowed spot; and this expression of poet, and of painter, and of sculptor, is but a shadow of its eternal softness and eternal beauty.

Seest thou a soul struggling after a pleasant

home, embowered in shady grove, and trellised with the woodbine, rose, and sweet-pea, and beaming within with all the tenderness of faithful love ; knowest thou that it is but pursuing the object of existence, and obeying the great principle of its being ? Love and rest : who would not live and die for these ?

Stillness is the perfection of human nature : in that unruffled silence there is the exercise of every faculty and every attribute.

In man's most blissful moments he is silent ; in his holiest seasons he is still ; in his most hallowed communion with those he loves he is without language ; words fail him then : he needs them not ; there is a deeper expression than the softest intonations of the lips. See it in the sculptured marble, and the dark, dim cathedral pile, and the sketch of painter, and the creation of poet ; see it, too, in our homes, when we kneel before the throne ; see it in those eventides when we sit with those "whom God has given us," and watch the closing flower, the rising moon, the vesper star.

Among our author's minor productions there are many choice gems. There is much of Wordsworth's style and sentiment in the following :—

There is an ancient man who dwells
Without our parish bounds,
Beyond the poplar-avenue,
Across two meadow-grounds ;
And whensoe'er our two small bells
To church call merrily,
Leaning on our churchyard gate,
This old man ye may see.

He is a man of many thoughts,
That long have found their rest,
Each in its proper dwelling-place
Settled within his breast :
A form erect, a stately brow,
A set and measured mien—
The satisfied unroving look
Of one who much hath seen.

And once, when young in care of souls,
I watched a sick man's bed,
And willing half, and half ashamed,
Lingered, and nothing said :
The ancient man, in accents mild,
Removed my shame away—
“ Listen !” he said ; “ the minister
Prepares to kneel and pray.”

These lines of humble thankfulness
Will never meet his eye ;
Unknown that old man means to live,
And unremembered die.
The forms of life have severed us—
But when that life shall end,
Fain would I hail that reverend man,
A father and a friend.

Several others of these shorter poems breathe the same chaste beauty and elegancy of diction. There is one which we admire much : a storm is raging without, when a child addresses its widowed father, in sweet, gentle accents, with a request that she might go and shield her mother's grave from the hurrying blast ; and the calm answer of the parent is such a striking contrast to the fear and perturbation of the child, that we almost feel a love for death and the tomb :—

“ Father, wake—the storm is loud,
The rain is falling fast ;

Let me go to my mother's grave,
And screen it from the blast.
She cannot sleep, she will not rest,
The wind is roaring so;
We prayed that she might lie in peace—
My father, let us go!"
“Thy mother sleeps too firm a sleep
To heed the wind that blows;
There are angel-charms that hush the noise
From reaching her repose.
Her spirit in dreams of the blessed Land
Is sitting at Jesu's feet:
Child, nestle thee in mine arms and pray
Our rest may be as sweet!"

There are several beautiful sketches in the poem entitled *A Doubt*, one of which we give :—

I know not how the right may be :—
But I have shed strange tears to see,
Passing an unknown town at night,
In some warm chamber full of light,
A mother and two children fair,
Kneeling with lifted hands at prayer.

It is sweet to have looked upon such a scene, and sweeter the remembrance. To travel by an old mail-coach on a frosty winter's night—to enter a quiet village, with its few pale and glimmering oil lamps casting a sickly and feeble glare on passing objects—to hear the hoofing of the horses and the blast of the horn—to see the shadows of the outside passengers on the pavement, rendered distinct by the silver beams of the moon—to stay at the large ancient inn—to warm oneself at the blazing fire—then to start again, and while travelling onwards, to behold such a picture of maternal affection and hallowed piety, must be thrilling indeed !

This scene links itself with that peaceful hour in which we first gazed upon the Countess Pillar : rememberest thou, O generous companion ? We had rambled far along the banks of the Eamont, and had beheld the fine towers of Brougham Hall, and had looked upon many a rose-clustered parsonage and old ivied church, and had lain ourselves down to rest on the night of Saturday.

The glorious sun shone brightly eastward when we issued from a snug road-side inn, about three miles from Penrith ; it stood at a little distance from the path, and enclosed on either side with a sweet honey-suckle hedge : every object seemed to breathe all the spiritual beauty and quietude of the Sabbath ; every sound of labour was hushed ; the peasants had left the fields ; the sky, save here and there dimpled with light fleecy clouds, was one wide hemisphere of blue : there was a soft tranquility on flower, and leaf, and tree, and grassy mead. We wended onwards towards the church of St. Ninian, now stopping to gaze on the unruffled serenity of heaven, and now stooping to gather some lovely violet. On our right stretched far away Skiddaw and Saddleback ; and on our left, the sheep were scattered on the refreshing turf.

We had not proceeded far ere the bells struck out with their soft, silvery melody ; the wind ever and anon swept their enchanting music towards us ; the past soon visioned itself, it came around the spirit like a dream ; pleasant memories played before the fancy, and as each liquid peal stole out, a new scene of beauty came floating by ; the by-

gone hours commingled with the present, and there were rich sounds of minstrelsy, and hallowed morns, and distant mountains, and invigorating gales, and pure blue heavens, and luxuriant trees, and million wild flowers, and holy thoughts.

After rambling some four miles or more, we got into the Kendal road, and soon came upon the Countess Pillar. It is a plain monument, bearing the arms of the family by whom the stone was raised, and the following inscription :—“ This pillar was erected in the year 1656, by Ann, Countess Dowager of Pembroke, &c., for a memorial of her last parting in this place with her good and pious mother, Margaret, Countess Dowager of Cumberland, on the 2nd of April, 1616; in memory whereof she had left an annuity of 4*l.*, to be distributed to the poor of the parish of Brougham, every second day of April for ever, upon the stone table placed hard by. *Laus Deo!* ” It stands on a bank to the right from Penrith, and is surrounded by an iron railing. It strikes one much when seen from the distance, but more so when we come near ; there is a solitariness about the aged stone—a pensive loneliness ; it seems to hallow every foot of ground ; the road becomes from henceforth sacred ; there is something woven around it even sweeter than song.

We sat down upon a grassy mound and gazed on the monument ; it was a season peculiarly suited for thought : every cloud in the heavens had rolled away ; all was one still and beautiful blue ; the sun shone in glory, and threw the stone’s shadow upon

the solitary road ; the wind came languidly on, and brought the delicious scent of the new-made hay ; the corn was golden with light. We sat and mused : the pillar called up a thousand fancies ; and the tinge of melancholy with which they were shaded, rendered them more pleasing to the mind. Two hundred years ago, a mother and her child parted on this spot : what emotions swayed their bosoms we can scarcely divine at this far-off hour, but they were doubtless painful. The road was rugged then, and even less frequented than now ; the dark fir may have lined its sides and covered the distant hills ; and who knows at what moment they separated ?—it may have been a stormy night, when the howling winds shook the sky ; but we think every wind would hush itself to rest at such a scene, and breathe its balmy breath on the sorrows of that hallowed season : whether it was so or no we cannot learn. We think we see them now : there they stand ; the hand is grasped with tenderest love, the tear rolls silently down the cheek, the last kiss is given, the last look taken, and the child watches the retiring footsteps of the mother until she is out of sight ; then turns away and weeps.

We have forbore to inquire into their history, if such exists, for it might dispel many of those associations which crowd around such a monument ; its light might scatter imagination's thoughts : without it, and we may invest the pillar with what ideas we choose. There is a sweetness at times in uncertainty : just so with this. We would rather

gaze upon its ancient stone, simple and plain as it is, without one record save that which it bears on its sides, than with the fullest and clearest knowledge ; there is a something left for the mind to fill up ; “ ample room and verge enough ” for the fancy wherein to play.

It was the last parting. How often did the child recal the bitterness of that hour !—how often did she live it over again !—how often gaze upon that spot which witnessed so much sorrow, and that heaven which looked down so still and so beautifully serene upon their griefs ! And here, even here, she came, after a lapse of forty years, and erected this solitary stone, to record what never had been forgotten. Oh ! and how many have beheld this lonely monument with thrilling thoughts. Here the gentle Rogers was melted to a soft, pensive mood, and in after years he poured out a liquid melody in memory of that scene ;—and Wordsworth, too, had hither come, and felt himself moved by unutterable emotions ;—and many a youth with fiery ambition glaring from the eye has paused, and better thoughts have taken hold upon him, and he has wished for the calm blessings of maternal love.

A “ good and pious mother ”—what hallowed memories in this—memories of Alfred, and Louis, and Cowper—memories of the ancient and the modern world—memories of touching sweetness and subduing power. A “ good and pious mother :” it hath a liquid language entering into every feeling of the soul ! We spoke of Louis. “ Under the

oak-trees of Vincennes, behold him sitting—his learned counsellors, Pierre de Fontaines and Geofroy de Velleottes, near by—waiting rather to arbitrate than judge between those who come to his tribunal. How patiently he listens—how anxiously he examines all proofs—how kindly he points out the middle way, overlooked by both disputants, which will conduct to justice! Can we still wonder that such a man, in such times, was soon to become a saint in the estimation of men?" Thanks to thee, Blanche, for thy maternal care, and love, and blessing!

The scene has changed; prince and people have passed away: those forest-trees which looked so beautiful in the long summer's afternoon have mouldered in the dust, and all their blithe choristers have ceased their silver warblings; the clouds have departed, and the sweet jessamine and luxuriant vine have alike dropped into forgetfulness. We are beneath another sky, and stand on different ground. It is the autumn of 1737, and the winds sweep over this Austrian land, onwards to the mountains of Switzerland: it is the small village of Rohrau, fifteen leagues from Vienna. See how the setting sun throws his last gleams on yonder cottage; that cottage is the home of hallowed peace; within its little parlour are gathered together the loved ones of parental affection; the father touches the harp's vibrating strings, and the mother sings to the issuing notes: there is a child there, gazing fondly into its mother's face; the sunset of the Sabbath-day puts on a more solemn grandeur—the twilight

deepens, and yet the holy hymn ceases not ; it increases in its magnificence of meaning ; now and then a leaf rustles to the earth, first sounding against the latticed window. The father and the mother, and that child of whom we spoke, catch the pensive melodies of nature ; the anthem rolls upwards ; the leaves drop faster ; the winds ever and anon gush loudly, then sink in “dying falls ;” the purple and the grey colouring of the western sky fades into a duskier hue ; the stars twinkle, then disappear, then twinkle out again. The music of that home arises in deeper harmony and intenser beauty ; the heart is moved, and it throbs with immortality : that child throws itself upon its mother’s bosom, and weeps wild tears of ecstasy. Mark that child, for he will thrill the world ; and the time will come when the recollection of this scene will give a diviner grandeur to his everlasting bursts of song.

Nearly seventy years after this, enter Vienna, and in yon fair palace of Prince Lobkowitz, hearken to the issuing sounds, sweet as the nightingale’s, yet magnificent as the roll of ocean : the room is large and spacious : fifteen hundred of the nobility and gentry of the Austrian capital are assembled ; the orchestra is crowded with near two hundred performers ; a dark swarthy man is borne in—he is placed in the midst of that illustrious company ; the roof rings with plaudits and the tremendous swell of gushing music ; the theme is Creation’s—the confusion of the elements jar and crash ; there is the bellowing of dim waters and loud thunders.

“The earth is without form and void, and darkness is upon the face of the deep ;” but anon, and there are rich symphonies and angelic acclamations, and “the new created world” mingles in every outburst of praise. Tears glisten in the eye of that old man, and ah ! he recals in this hour of his triumph, the little parlour, and the harp, and the Sabbath evening, and the face of parents, and the maternal affection which beamed on him so long ago, and he blesses his good and pious mother !

Such thoughts and such scenes came before us whilst sitting beneath the morning sun and looking upon that stone ; and then we would wander to the abode of Ann, Countess of Pembroke, and picture the sports, and amusements, and lonely retirements of her youth : there was a pleasure of a pure and holy kind in such a reverie ; the simple monument stood so solitary in the broad blaze of the noonday beams. Ah ! it was the record of one sorrowful hour ; it spoke of a daughter’s feelings—feelings which years could never efface. There might be a want of order in our thoughts, but there was a silvery harmony in the spell ; it might have been delusive, but it was one which tended to exalt and purify the spirit. How the good old Izaak Walton would have loved to have gazed upon this hallowed memento of a child’s affection !

On this spot we could have lingered for hours ; there was a divine sorcery binding us ; the whole road became henceforth interesting. We can never think of its pathway over hill and through solitary dale, and by the winding river, without a thrilling

emotion of pensive delight; it is the lonely pillar that bestows the fascinating charm; every bush, and tree, and rill, and cornfield, and grassy meadow, and wild lane, and hedgerow, becomes sacred: memories of earth's sweetest loveliness cling around them, and they come like blessings to the soul.

The sonnets of our poet are finely written: two On Seeing our Family Vault, are nervous and beautiful. The one has all the solemnity and gloominess of death, the other catches the music of immortality; the former is a sad picture of the cold grave, the latter scents of coming Spring and budding flowers. This on an Autumn evening is very pleasing:—

How soothing is that sound of far-off wheels
Under the golden sheen of the harvest-moon!
In the shade-chequered road it half reveals
A homeward-wending group, with heart in tune
To thankful merriment;—father and boy,
And maiden with her gleanings on her head;
And the last waggon's rumble heard with joy
In the kitchen with the ending-supper spread.
But while I listening stand, the sound hath ceased;
And hark, from many voices lustily
The harvest-home, the prelude to the feast,
In measured bursts is pealing loud and high;
Soon all is still again beneath the bright
Full moon, that guides me home this autumn night.

What an exquisite description of harvest-home. Dearly do we love this relic of our olden times; and there is something peculiarly sweet in sitting upon some mossy bank in a straggling lane, and listening to the merry laughter of the swains. The

scene possesses all the loveliness of a dream : the old farm-house, with its high-thatched roof and shady trees ; the great waggons laden with the golden corn ; the rumbling of the heavy wheels ; the colours flying on some Maypole ; the bright countenances of master and men ; and the calm beauty of the coming evening, form one of England's happiest pictures.

One other sonnet, and we have done : it is addressed to his “own dear country,” and recounts its many charming beauties ; the most lovely features of our sea-girt isle are brought within the compass of fourteen lines. What stirrings of old it awakens ! We seem again to traverse her sunny roads ; to linger in her wild green lanes ; to wander along her flowing streams ; to recline on her romantic banks, and dream the hours away ; to saunter in her shady dells ; to walk through her rustic villages ; to sit within her quiet churchyards ; to gaze on tower and steeple, rising skyward ; to hear her silvery bells ; to behold her peaceful rectories, and happy dwellings, and ancestral mansions, with their elms and rooks :—

My own dear country !—thy remembrance comes
Like softly-flowing music on my heart ;
With thy green sunny hills, and happy homes,
And cots rose-bowered, bosomed in dells apart ;
The merry pealing of our village-bells
Gush ever and anon upon mine ear ;
And is there not a far-off sound that tells
Of many-voiced laughter shrill and clear ?
Oh ! were I now with thee—to sit and play
Under the hawthorn on the slope o’ the hill,
As I was wont to do ; or pluck all day

The cowslip and the flaunting daffodil,
Till shepherds whistled homeward, and the West
Folded the large sun in her crimson breast !

Alford has increased our love of nature ; his poems scent with all the freshness and beauty of an April day ; his verse is as clear and deep as the melody which breaks in the air when spring awakes ; his productions have invested the outward creation with a more exquisite grace than it heretofore possessed ; so much have the intellect and the soul done for this planet, that “when the sun comes up in earliest summer’s dawn, flushing with his glorious hues the sweet opal regions of the eastern sky ; when the mists of the valley float up at his warm approach in whiteness ; when the greenness of woods and meadows, the quiet loveliness of flocks and herds, the glitter of streams, and the smoke of cottages, all send into the heart images of freshness and immortal beauty ; when the ocean comes thundering with all his strength and splendour in the midst of such a scene ; when noon broods over in a bright stillness ; when evening creeps on with its coolness and its shadows, drawing after it the glory of gorgeous sunsets ; the sombre gloom of deep woods ; the golden beaming of far and clear prospects ; the feeling of quiet and rest accompanied by the floating odours of flowers, and the last hum of the bee ; and when night builds the canopy of its stars, and showers its moonlight enchantment on the earth below—in all these changes the face of nature has become almost as speaking, as entrancing to the cultivated man,

as the face of woman itself ; it is to him rich with all the colours of memory and poets. It brings with it wisdom and song, history and the sentiment of music and painting, from the pages of those who have seen these things before him, or perhaps with him, and which have peopled earth for him with the beings of the mind." And so hath the Spirit given to this wide world a language of deeper thought and holier feeling. And it is to such poets as the one who has formed the subject of this criticism, that we owe these richer harmonies and these richer glories.

EDWIN ATHERSTONE.

THE mystery which enshrouds the history of Nineveh renders what little we know more deeply interesting : we have but few records, but those records characterize it as a city of vast and unparalleled magnificence. We look back upon this great Assyrian capital as on some mighty and stupendous dream. The outline is indistinct, the colouring imperfect, and the figures broken, but there is one grand feature of majesty and glory upon each and all ; everything is Titanic ; everything is colossal. There is a splendour about the very figments which strikes one with awe and astonishment.

And this greatness has passed away, as passes the morning dew or the April shower ; a few crumbling walls are all that remain of its pomp and glory. Its voluptuous banquettings have departed ; the voice of the singer is no longer heard ; the dulcimer and harp are mute ; the dancing girl has ceased to move ; its palm, and cedar, and pine have faded ; its flowers, which flung their odours on every breeze, have perished ; its temples and palaces are not ; its star, once so bright and resplendent, has waned and gone down ; there is scarce a streak of twilight in the horizon. The

gigantic monarchy has fallen ; its throne is in the dust ; it has been ; it is not now. Three thousand years ago, the sun shook off his glories in the sky, and Nineveh stretched herself as a giant beneath his rays : that sun arose to-day, and all was desolation —the million homes swept away, and the million inhabitants in the grave ;—once its abodes towered up to heaven, and its chariots poured through its “two-leaved gates,” and its vast population rent the air with shoutings : see that mound of bricks ; it is the only remnant ! “So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord !”

History’s tale is brief ; and prophecy, too, says little : but that little shadows out its magnificence and renown.

In the year 1237, b.c., Ninus, flushed with victory, laid the foundation of the Assyrian capital. At his death, Semiramis became regent during the minority of their son, and added much to the city. Her strength of mind, energy of will, and boldness of execution, contributed greatly to extend the glory of her husband’s kingdom. Ninyas then ascended the throne, but instead of exhibiting any of his parents’ vigour, he gave himself up to debauchery and effeminacy ; his successors followed but too closely his example ; and the people groaned beneath the injustice of sordid ministers.

Behold that rectangular city ! it has numbered four hundred years. There is a sound of revelling and drunkenness ; her daughters have grown wanton ; the capital is in one tumultuous uproar ; a strange, wild man enters ; he travels onwards,

crying :—“ Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown ! ” On, still on, he passes ; his finger pointed skyward, his eye beams with the prophetic fire, and his lips quiver with the prophetic language. The rose-bowers, the myrtle-walks, and the gorgeous palaces are forsaken ; the people crowd around ; they question : no answer comes, but the ever-awful denunciation : “ Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.” That man has departed.

The city sends up its mournings and lamentations : sackcloth instead of royal apparel. Young virgins tear off their fine linen, and clothe themselves in the dark black garb : instead of flowery wreaths, ashes ; instead of the dance, the bended knee ; the multitude moan ; repentance goes upwards ; the Throne is reached ; the capital stands !

Those myriads are dust ; the earth covers them all. Five generations have lived, and are here in the tomb. The palaces still look glorious, the rose-bowers and myrtle-walks are as lovely as when last we gazed. The splendour and the magnificence of the city are undiminished. The fresh wind sweeps over her thousand domes and minarets as before ; their architecture outspreads its beauties to the sun. There is the rich perfume of jasmine, and the silver music of a million fountains. The day-god westering, sinks ; the halls are lighted up, and sparkle with myriad gems ; low, sweet harmonies breathe out their divine witcheries. Midnight overhangs the capital of the world.

Morning breaks. At the chief entrance stands

a stranger of commanding mien ; he surveys the princely buildings ; his lips move : he speaks :— “ Woe to the bloody city ! it is full of lies and robbery ; the prey departeth not ; the noise of a whip, and the noise of the rattling of the wheels, and of the prancing horses, and of the jumping chariots. The horseman lifteth up both the bright sword and the glittering spear : and there is a multitude of slain, and a great number of carcasses ; and there is none end of their corpses ; they stumble upon their corpses : because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the well-favoured harlot, the mistress of witchcrafts, that selleth nations through her whoredoms, and families through her witchcrafts. Behold, I am against thee, saith the Lord of hosts ; and I will discover thy skirts upon thy face, and I will show the nations thy nakedness, and the kingdoms thy shame. And I will cast abominable filth upon thee, and make thee vile, and will set thee as a gazing-stock. And it shall come to pass, that all they that look upon thee shall flee from thee, and say, Nineveh is laid waste : Who will bemoan her ? Whence shall I seek comforters for thee ? Art thou better than populous No, that was situate among the rivers, that had the waters round about it, whose rampart was the sea, and her wall was from the sea ? Ethiopia and Egypt were her strength, and it was infinite ; Put and Lubim were thy helpers : yet was she carried away, she went into captivity ; her young children also were dashed in pieces at the top of all the streets ; and they cast lots for her honourable men,

and all her great men were bound in chains. Thou also shalt be drunken ; thou shalt be hid ; thou also shalt seek strength, because of the enemy. All thy strongholds shall be like fig-trees with the first ripe figs ; if they be shaken, they shall even fall into the mouth of the eater. Behold, thy people in the midst of thee are women ; the gates of thy land shall be set wide open unto thine enemies ; the fire shall devour thy bars. Draw the waters for the siege, fortify thy strongholds : go into clay, and tread the mortar, and make strong the brick-kiln. There shall the fire devour thee ; the sword shall cut thee off ; it shall eat thee up like a canker-worm : make thyself many as the canker-worm —make thyself many as the locusts. Thou hast multiplied thy merchants above the stars of heaven : the canker-worm spoileth, and fleeth away. Thy crowned are as the locusts, and thy captains as the great grasshoppers, which camp in the hedges in the cold day, but when the sun ariseth they flee away, and their place is not known where they are. Thy shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria ; thy nobles shall dwell in the dust ; thy people is scattered upon the mountains, and no man gathereth them. There is no healing of thy bruise ; thy wound is grievous ; all that hear the bruit of thee shall clap the hands over thee : for upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually ?”

The people scoff and the princes taunt ; they believe not. Sardanapalus, the king, returns back to his palace, and again attires himself in woman's apparel ; music, the song, and the dance will

drown every presentiment ! Ever and anon mockeries arise. Revel on—the storm is breaking !

A few hours, and there is the rumour of a revolt : the melodies cease ; the monarch girds himself for war ; he rushes out, followed by his troops, and defeats the rebels. Joy once more in the city !

Belesis and Arbaces twice again offer resistance, and twice again are driven back.

The moon shines softly down, and the whole heaven is gemmed with burning stars : Orion there, and the Pleiades, and Mazzaroth ; the mountains stand stilly in the clear bright night, and the palm and fir wave their branches in the hollow gust that ever and anon sweeps up their sides. There is the sound as of a human voice in prayer ; the supplication deepens in its intonations ; the language every moment grows more impassioned ; it beseeches destruction on Assyria's king : the words wax louder and more eloquent ; there is a struggle as of death ; it breaks into one tremendous ejaculation—“ Nineveh must fall ! Nineveh must fall !”

The sun arises ; the streak of light chequers the horizon ; the stars fade out ; the moon is as some small fleecy cloud ; the mountain-tops are crimsoned with the coming brightness ; the dark, majestic trees are tinged with the same rich colouring ; twilight wanes ; the sun ascends higher yet and higher ; the last words come on the ear, as the dashing of a cataract beneath a stormy sky, or the crash of a forest oak splintered by the lightning's flash—“ Nineveh must fall ! Nineveh must fall !”

Belesis—for that is the man—now joins his

companions, and promises help in five days, if they will but tarry. The first morning comes up, and fades into dim night ; the second and the third pass away—there is breathless suspense ; the other two have gone, and still no assistance. We will return home to our wives and our little ones is the general thought. Suddenly there are tidings of the march of the Bactrian troops on their way to the monarch ; these are gained over to revolt, and the rebels, thus reinforced, attack the royal camp, and drive Sardanapalus into the city.

Two long years have passed, and the capital of the world still uprears its magnificent front to the sky, and the third has come ;—there is yet energy in the besiegers and the besieged. The river, once its safeguard as well as ornament, heaves, swells, and overflows ; it has now become its enemy, according to ancient prediction. Silence is in the palace, and everlasting leave-taking ; smoke curls upwards ; it is from the funeral-pile of the Assyrian empire !

Aherstone's poem on this subject is perhaps the most gorgeous and brilliant in the English language ; nothing can equal its oriental splendour and voluptuousness. The verse is laden with the richest perfumes, and the loveliest flowers, and the silver spray of fountains, and delicious fruits, and deep-toned symphonies, and dream-like melodies, and golden wines, and softest alabaster lamps, and marble walls, and thrones as of one huge diamond, and orange groves, and myrtle walks, and rose bowers, and whisperings of trees and birds, and

the distant hum of the vast city, and the din of battle, and purple banners, and the thunderous clashings of the chariots, and the tremendous shoutings of the hostile hosts, and the dashing of the heavy rain, and the flash of lightnings, and the ponderous thunder-peals. There are ravishing strains of music, and long banquetings, and moon-light nights, and shady groves, and invocation to the stars, and the voice of tenderness, and love's sweet looks, and festivals, and dark councils, and the mighty murmurings of rebellion, and the sounds of defeat, and the cries of triumph. The events move slowly, but they move with majesty and grandeur; the poem intoxicates one with its beauties—stuns by its magnificence. We might have been wandering in some luxurious Eden, with its perfection and glory, for years, and then have suddenly seen the enchanting spot swept over by the howling winds and lashed to atoms. We are at first astonished, and then sink back palled; there is a dazzling vividness about all his descriptions, but it is often too bright for common eyes.

What a picture of eastern voluptuousness is this:—

The moon is clear, the stars are coming forth;
The evening breeze fans pleasantly. Retired
Within his gorgeous hall, Assyria's king
Sits at the banquet; and in love and wine
Revels unfearing. On the gilded roof
A thousand golden lamps their lustre fling,
And on the marble walls, and on the throne,
Gem-bossed, that, high on jasper steps upraised,
Like to one solid diamond, quivering stands,
Sun-splendours flashing round. In woman's garb

The sensual king is clad ; and with him sit
 A crowd of beauteous concubines. They sing,
 And shoot the sparkling glance ; and laugh, and sigh :
 And feed his ear with honeyed flatteries ;
 And laud him as a god. All rarest flowers,
 Bright-hued and fragrant, in the brilliant light
 Bloom as in sunshine : like a mountain-stream,
 Amid the silence of the dewy eve,
 Heard by the lonely traveller through the vale,
 With dream-like murmuring melodious,
 In diamond showers a crystal fountain falls.
 All fruits delicious, and of every clime,
 Beauteous to sight and odoriferous,
 Invite the taste : and wines of sunny light,
 Rose-hued, or golden ; for the feasting gods
 Fit nectar. Sylph-like girls, and blooming boys,
 Flower-crowned, and in apparel bright as spring,
 Attend upon their bidding : at the sign,
 From bands unseen, voluptuous music breathes ;
 Harp, dulcimer ; and sweetest far of all,
 Woman's mellifluous voice.

BOOK I.

Again in the fifteenth Book :—

And as the eve drew on, with the cool breeze,
 The damsels of the city came abroad,
 And with the nobles and the captains danced,
 And with the soldiers each in her degree.
 Their garments were of every delicate hue ;
 Linen like snow, silk light as gossamer.
 Their anklets were of silver, and of gold ;
 And golden chains, and strings of pearls, and gems
 Circled their necks : their ear-rings were pure gold,
 And jewels ; and their zones, of Tyrian dye,
 Round the slim waist with buckles of fine gold
 And gems were clasped. Adown the shoulders some
 Let fall the ambrosial ringlets, waving loose ;
 Some the rich tresses into graceful knots
 Had woven, and in golden network bound,
 Or strings of orient pearl.

Nor is the gay luxuriousness of the Assyrian capital less gorgeously pencilled :—

Through all the city sounds the voice of joy,
And reckless merriment. On the spacious walls,
That, like huge sea-cliffs, gird the city in,
Myriads of wanton feet go to and fro :
Gay garments rustle in the scented breeze ;
Crimson and azure, purple, green, and gold :
Laugh, jest, and passing whisper are heard there ;
Timbrel, and lute, and dulcimer, and song :
And many feet that tread the dance are seen ;
And arms upflung ; and swaying heads plume-crowned.
So is that city steeped in revelry.

BOOK I.

Deeper are the tints of his pencil in the fine sketch of the Assyrian queen :—

Thus speaking, a cerulean mantle first,
Wide flowing, airy as the gossamer,
Round her fine shoulders, with majestic grace,
The royal dame disposed ; and on her breast
With clasp of pearl and ruby lightly bound :
O'er her dark tresses next—all unadorned,
Save in their own luxuriant loveliness—
And o'er her pale and melancholy face,
Augustly beautiful ! a rich veil threw ;
Then with her damsels—graceful as love's queen,
Majestic as the imperial spouse of Jove—
Forth from the palace walked ; and the steep mount
With slow step 'gan to climb.

BOOK II.

The monarch raises a mount over the ashes of his great progenitor. The million troops crowd the walls. The king ascends and gazes on the vast multitudes. The Assyrian banner is uplifted ; it flaps over the huge city ; “in a moment more

up came the monstrous universal shout like a volcano's burst :”—

At his height,
A speck scarce visible, the eagle heard,
And felt his strong wing falter: terror-struck,
Fluttering and wildly screaming, down he sank—
Down through the quivering air: another shout:
His talons droop—his sunny eye grows dark—
His strengthless penons fail—plumb down he falls,
Even like a stone. Amid the far-off hills,
With eye of fire, and shaggy mane upreared,
The sleeping lion in his den sprang up;
Listened awhile,—then laid his monstrous mouth
Close to the floor, and breathed hot roarings out
In fierce reply.

BOOK II.

Perhaps the following is one of Atherstone's most beautiful passages :—

'Twas midnight now: the melancholy moon,
With wasted face unwillingly arose
To walk her weary course: upon the plains
Gleamed faintly the moist herbage: shadows drear,
And long, from lofty and umbrageous trees,
Slept on the earth; pale light, and dreamy shade
Covered the silent city; her huge towers,
Like a Titanic watch, all standing mute;
And, in the centre, like the spectre-form
Of perished Saturn, or some elder god,
The dim vast mound. Within their tents, the hosts,
Or on the earth, in heavy slumber lay;
Some of the battle dreaming,—some of love,
Of home, and smiling wives, and infants some;
The chase some urged—some at the wine-board sat,
And drank unmeasured draughts, and thirsted still.

BOOK IV.

There is something sublime in this silence over the gigantic city and the sleeping hosts. It is not

the balmy silence after the last warble of the shepherd's lute has sunk away ; nor the silence after the last silvery chime of the chapel bell, heard in some lone wood, has floated on the air ; nor the silence after the majestic symphonies of the organ have died along the cathedral aisles ; nor the silence after the fall of some forest-tree which has looked upon the rising sun for centuries ; nor the silence of ocean after it has spent its force, and ripples gently on the shore ; nor the silence of the outstretched creation after the deep loud crash of thunders ; nor the silence after the hurricane has swept thousands into the grave, and desolated the beautiful homes of the happy ; nor the silence of the north, which, says Alfieri, "makes one feel himself removed far beyond the boundaries of existence." It is a silence, sublimer and more momentous. The coming conflict, the unfurling of banners, the war shouts, the martial clangs, the rushing of the hostile armies, the dying shrieks, the clashing of chariots, the snorting of steeds, and the tremendous slaughter give the silence an expression which seems, as it were, to stop the breathing of the heart.

These, descriptive of battle, display great power :

But now in horrid shock the chariots joined :
Dreadful the crash of wheels fast locked—the plunge
Of mailed steeds,—the ringing of the shields,
Corslets, and helms ; and dreadful were the shouts
Of triumph, and the cries and dying groans.
Now, too, on either side, the barbed steeds—
Ten times ten thousand—to the battle poured ;
And the earth trembled.

BOOK V.

Then on the Assyrians came,
 Confusion and dismay ; and, as they turned,
 Shunning the iron tempest, with loud cries
 The foe pursued, and terrified the steeds,
 That they fled masterless.

BOOK V.

With a shout,
 Louder than thunder, all that mighty host
 Turned suddenly, and on th' astonished Medes
 Drove like a hurricane. They, amazed and stunned,
 Heard, saw, and wavered ; for, as one to four,
 Their numbers were,—their limbs with toil were worn,—
 They had no walls of refuge. All amazed
 There stood they doubtfully ; then looked behind,—
 Looked—turned—and fled.

BOOK VI.

Turned now the hosts
 From conflict both ; for, with redoubled rage
 The storm came on ; in torrents fell the rain,—
 The wind arose—the lightnings thicker flashed :
 Earth shook beneath the thunders. To the walls
 Hasted the Assyrians,—towards their camp the Medes.

BOOK VI.

As when, at sultry noon, the thunderous clouds,
 Dark, motionless, and silent, threatening hang,—
 No wind is felt, and not a sound is heard ;—
 If, then, th' ethereal bolt, with sudden glance,
 The black mass fire ; out roars the awful peal,—
 Cloud calls to cloud,—air quivers, and earth shakes :
 Even so,—dark lowering, with amazement mute,
 His vehement words to hear, the multitude
 Stood motionless ; even so at once outburst
 On that dead stillness the tremendous din.
 A thousand swords leaped forth,—ten thousand tongues,
 With dreadful accents, for the Assyrian's blood
 Called out.

BOOK VIII.

But, as when loudest roars the hurricane,
 When pines bow down, and stubborn oaks are rent ;

With yet a louder peal the thunder-god
 From the opening cloud doth call; so, o'er the din
 Of furious myriads, the vehement voice
 Rose of Arbaces.

BOOK VIII.

As when, by adverse winds impelled, two clouds,
 Black and enormous, are together driven,
 Outleap the lightnings, and the thunders roar;
 Cloud calls to cloud,—mountain to mountain calls,—
 Heaven unto earth, and earth to heaven again,—
 With uproar such, doubts redoubling, rose
 The clamours of the fierce, encountering hosts.

BOOK X.

Tremendous now the thickening conflict grew;
 Rank against rank, like wave 'gainst mountain wave,
 Rolling and heaving. Not a cloud in heaven
 Stirred from its place,—the winds were locked,—no leaf
 Moved,—nor thin blade, nor pendant gossamer;—
 As if the issue of that mortal strife
 Breathless awaiting, nature seemed to pause.

BOOK X.

In contrast the following lose none of their
 beauty:—

Upon a couch,
 Purple, and gold, and gems, the king reposed:
 His eyes were shut, his countenance was pale:
 Before him, but not near, Azubah sat,
 O'er the harp bending, and her lulling song
 Like a sweet perfume breathing.

BOOK XI.

Long had the sun gone down: upon his couch
 The monarch lay, his eyes with wine and sleep
 Heavy and dim. But now before him stood
 A damsel, beauteous as a flower of spring;
 A dulcimer was in her snow-white hand:
 And, as she played, a song of love she sang,
 That stirred and melted him. Her gem-starred zone,
 As heaved and fell her bosom, might appear
 With smiles now brightening, darkening now with sighs.

An atmosphere divine, the breath of love,
 Like glory round the sun, encompassed her.
 Her face was radiant as the pearly cloud
 Of Summer's dewy dawn; her hair like night,
 When no star shineth. As she lifted up
 The dark-fringed curtain of her lustrous eye,
 'Twas as the glance of moonlight through swift clouds.
 Her voice was soft as cooing of young dove
 In a spring evening, when the nightingale
 Singeth alone; yet breathed voluptuously
 As the warm south, when flowers are in their bloom,
 And the rain softly droppeth. The king's soul
 Was melted at her voice: her lustrous eye
 She turned upon him; and his breast was flame.

BOOK xv.

Dara, with hand untiring, from the harp
 Called breathing tones, and maze-like harmonies,
 Such as a quiet spirit might have lapped
 In dreams elysian. Now they seemed to float,
 Like some ethereal choir, in upper air;
 Now murmured like the moaning of the wind
 In the dim forest; now again came on,
 Stealthily creeping, like a streamlet's voice
 Borne on a gentle breeze; and now died off,
 As from their own excess of sweetness, faint.

BOOK xxi.

How exquisitely beautiful is this—the tempest-swelling hymn of battle rolls surging upwards, one huge mass of ponderous sounds:—

A two days' journey distant, 'mid the hills,
 Stood Israelitish shepherds, with their flocks:
 The unwonted sounds they heard, and said, "Behold
 The heavens are opened, and a multitude
 Of angels cometh down!"

BOOK xxii.

One other of Atherstone's gorgeous paintings, and we must quit this magnificent production.

Thrice have the rebels been routed, and the Assyrian conqueror returns in pride and glory to his capital :—

A myriad gonfalons of bright hue streamed,
A myriad silver trumpets spake to heaven :
Blazed the bright chariots—the gold-spangled steeds
Beneath their flaming riders proudly trode ;
Flashed helm and shield of gold, and dazzling mail ;
And, with unnumbered martial instruments
Accompanied,—unto the mighty Bel,
And to Sardanapalus, king of kings,
Triumphal hymns the banded armies sang.

Her brazen gates wide flung the city then ;
And on the plain, with acclamations loud,
The conqueror hailing, countless multitudes,
Dense thronging, poured ; and on her walls the throngs
Expecting stood ; and on her lofty towers.
Assyria's damsels there, and peerless dames ;
Like tulip beds, in richest vesture clad,
Made sunshine seem more bright,—and, to the breath
Of the sweet south, a sweeter fragrance breathed.
But, beautiful amidst the beautiful,
Amid a bright heaven the one brightest star,
Assyria's goddess queen, in regal state
Magnificent,—to pomp imparting grace,
To triumph majesty,—her lord to meet,
From the great central eastern gate came forth.
High throned upon a car, with gold and gems
Refulgent, slowly rode she. Diamond wreaths,
Amid her ebon locks luxuriant, gleamed,
Like heaven's lamps through the dark : her ample robe,
Sky-hued, like to a waving sapphire glowed :
And round one graceful shoulder wreathed, one arm
Of rose-tinged snow, a web-like drapery,
Bright as a ruby streak of morning, hung.
Beneath her swelling bosom, chastely warm,
A golden zone, with priceless gems thick starred,
Flashed gentle lightnings. The unresting fire
Of diamond, and the ruby's burning glow, -

With the pure sapphire's gentle beam mixed there :
 The flamy topaz, with the emerald cool,
 Like sunshine dappling the spring meadows, played ;
 Gold was the clasp, and ruby. Bracelets light,
 Of emerald, and diamond, and gold,
 On each fine tapered, pearly wrist she wore :
 And, round her pillared neck majestical,
 A slender chain of diamond,—the weight
 Sustaining of one priceless diamond,
 Like dawn faint blushing, radiant as the morn ;
 That on her creamy bosom, like a spark
 Of sun-fire on rich pearl embedded,—lay.
 With graceful ease, and perfect dignity,
 Yet womanly softness ; like a shape of heaven,
 In majesty of beauty,—pale, serene—
 With eye oft downcast, yet with swelling heart
 Proudly exultant ; on her gorgeous seat
 Reclined, of Tyrian purple, golden fringed,—
 By all eyes mutely worshipped, she rode on.

In shining cars, behind Assyria's queen,
 The sons and daughters also of the king,
 To grace the triumph of the conqueror came.

He in his blazing chariot, like a god,
 Exulting rode. His helm and mail laid by ;
 The sunlike crown upon his head : in robes
 Attired, that like one waving gem appeared ;
 Amid the thunder of applauding hosts,
 Onward he came. His coursers' arching necks
 With gems and gold were hung ;—and far before,
 Behind, and round his chariot—glittering bright
 With gold and gems, like a phosphoric sea—
 His choicest captains, and his royal guard,
 On their proud treading steeds rode gallantly.

BOOK XIII.

Farewell, thou magnificent city !—thy glory and
 renown have thrilled our life-blood. We have
 beheld thy palaces gem-lit, and thy halls blazing
 beneath the glare of diamond lamps, and thy beau-
 tiful women have danced by, and the sound of

music has stolen onwards, and we have scented thy flowery groves, and heard the melodies of thy many fountains—farewell, thou splendid capital ! it may be long before we look upon thy like again—perhaps, never. For awhile, thou hast driven off the din and stir and cold-heartedness of the world ; and in thy jasmine bowers we have rested, and drunk in the coolness of thy breeze. Farewell—we have loved thee. Amid all thy gorgeousness and revellings, thou hadst a noble heart. Once through thy streets were wafted on the wind the sigh of penitence and the prayer of faith ; thou didst then prevail with Israel's God ; but thy sons grew vile, and thy monarch viler, and ye wept not when vengeance threatened ; therefore hath ruin seized thee, and utter desolation ! thy chariots and thy horsemen have fallen ; thy walls, so massive, are in the dust ; the gale sweeps by as heretofore, but it carries not on its bosom the thousand sweets of thy gardens and violet-walks ; there is no perfume now ; the stars kindle in thy hemisphere, but no eye upturned from thee watches their spiritual meaning ; the moon is there, as of old, but no fond maiden gazes thereon, and thinks of the bridal night ; dulcimer and harp have passed away : the loved and loving. Farewell, bright city !

Four years previous to the appearance of the first volume of Nineveh, came out our author's Midsummer-Day's Dream ; a work characterized by the same magnificent spirit. It describes in glowing language the splendours of universal nature ; it reminds one of Beethoven's immortal

Hallelujah chorus in his Mount of Olives ; it is a tremendous burst of richest music ; it is “like deep-toned thunder, blended with soft whispering rain-drops.” There is much of the rising grandeur of Haydn’s New Created World : it is the song of the spheres, the hymn of Creation ; it is as thrilling to the senses as when a “star gilds the bright summit of some gloomy cloud.” It has the stateliness of Mozart’s minstrelsy ; there is the subtle harmony of “dulcet instruments” and “silver stir of strings ;” and then out-swell the gorgeous sounds rolling onwards with the ocean’s dash of everlasting waters. We mingle with other beings lovelier than those of earth ; we listen to melodies more exquisite than the soft warble of lute or the liquid note of nightingale ; we behold star after star glittering and gleaming resplendently beneath its own rich golden sunlight ; it is the harmony of the heavens —clear, soothing, divine !

Our poet is keenly sensible to all the beautiful influences of the outward creation ; his imagination ascends on angelic wings ; it paints with all the enchanting colours of the rainbow ; the grandeur and the sweetness of his fancy bind us as with the magician’s spell.

On the bright and merry day of Midsummer, the poet leaves his dwelling, and after sauntering along wild, grassy lanes, and through hay-fields, and climbing the summit of a steep hill, he lays himself down on the flowery turf, and with half-shut eyes gazes on the blue expanse of immensity :

soon sleep, a soft sweet sleep, falls on him, and thus he dreams :—

A form most beautiful and majestic stands before him, and offers to show him the wonders of the universe. “The air takes fragrance” as he speaks ; the offer is joyfully accepted ; his ear is opened, and his eye unsealed ; and there are sounds, delicious sounds, of divinest music, issuing upward from every tree, and flower, and bank, and hill, and mountain, and river ; the harmonies breathed out “like exhalations,” or “floated above like perfume on the air ;” the winds and clouds, and the “thin moon-mist” mingled their exquisite melodies in creation’s hymn.

They immediately are wafted over the rolling waters and beautiful islands of our planet to the North Pole ; they gaze on the far out-stretched hills of ice, which glitter in every brilliant hue—the diamond, the ruby, and the emerald—beneath the blaze of the setting sun. The serene eventide came gently on, and the shades deepened ; all was still and motionless ; the winds had sunk into a soft breeze, and even this was dropping ; the twilight darkens, and the western luminary once more bursting from the clouds, lights up the snowy regions with gems of every tinge and colour ; the silver stars sparkle in the wide heavens : then comes the music of that spirit-guide, describing in glowing numbers the glories of the northern winter.

They ascend into the air ; and pass over a huge continent ; again, the sea flashes gloriously beneath

the light of dawn : they then sink down and reach its rocky bottom ; they look up, and all is one vast emerald. A moment before, the sun shone in his fresh refulgence in the eastern heaven, and the waves thundered their deep, majestic music ; but now there is naught save silence. They look around, and behold the ruins of a gigantic city : some myriad of ages back, it was the abode of life and beauty ; within its palaces the sound of harp, and dulcimer, and lute was heard, among its trees and flowers the evening zephyr sighed, bright intelligences graced its halls and bowers, and the song arose heavenward. Now the melody and dance were gone : solitude sat lonely there.

Through rocks hard as adamant they sink and reach the centre of the earth : here are the everlasting fires ; on one tremendous arch the hills and valleys have a firm foundation : the flames roar incessantly ; the poet's senses fail ; he feels as if that beautiful spirit-guide had departed ; before his eyes stands the ponderous axle on which the world turns its weight : all around, "beings like statues of hot iron," glare on him ; then the fires faded, the axle and the mighty thralls were lost in darkness ; on his ear arose the bellowing of the flames, and the rolling of this planet "with the noise of iron clanking :" each sense grew dimmer, and the imagination reeled, when again the sound of the spirit's voice came sweetly.

A storm is raging on the sea ; they swiftly ascend, and there is a moan as of dashing waters ; it swells loud and louder ; the waves toss their spray

up to the dark, tempestuous sky ; in the fading eventide of day they behold a vessel sink. Higher still they rise ; the fury of the storm increases ; the foam is dashed upwards to the stars ; the rain comes down in torrents ; the winds howl furiously ; the black clouds cover the whole hemisphere ; the lightnings flash and flash again, and the thunders rumble, groan, break out in tremendous claps. They still ascend, and pass into the pure ether : the poet casts back a lingering look upon the earth ; the storm seemed but a little point of blackness ; and the sleeping vales, and hills dappled with light and shade, and lonely walks, and running streams, and majestic forests, and Eden-isles, and lakes shadowing in their bosoms the high summits of their mountains, looked beautiful and bright. Higher yet and higher ; the world is but a star, a moment more and it is lost in the magnificent assemblage of constellations.

Our sun flashes like a diamond on the sight ; near and more near they approach ; the scenery becomes vast and gigantic—mountains of ruby, and emerald, and topaz tower above them—forests spread out their luxuriant foliage, and rivers, greater than the oceans of our lowly world, roll with ever-deepening music.

The land blushes with entrancing beauty ; the inhabitants are more powerful than man ; their dwellings are of diamond and amethyst, their chariots look like one living sapphire, their ships are fragrant with undecaying wood, the decks a glowing pearl, the sails of deepest crimson, and the

ropes of twisted gold ; there is no decay ; the forests, and the fields, and the flowers are eternal ; the gentle dew, as it dissolves, breathes out the sweetest odour ; their trees seem “pillars for a temple where the gods might worship the One Deity ;” and it has bowers rose-crowned, and streams, and emerald banks, and birds of gorgeous plumage, and cities of “inconceivable splendour.” Over a boundless landscape soon they wing their flight, and sink down at last on a mountain’s brow : opposite stood a mighty pile, its dome, sky-tinctured and towering up until its loftiest pinnacle appeared “like the twinkling of a distant star ;” its gates, “on their diamond hinges turning, gave a sound as of a multitude of harps,” and “one deep thunder-note.” Three angels issued forth, and uplifted the golden trumpet ; “three times they blew ; three times from infinite space came the long answers back.” Suddenly, a low sweet sound arose, then deepened into grandeur and burst with tremendous music ; deeper and deeper still, swelling onwards from ten thousand worlds rolling and surging and breaking into choruses ocean-hymned. The millions assembled beneath the sapphire-lighted dome ; then came the adoration anthem, clear and silvery, yet sweeping as the hurricane among the forest trees. The presence of divinity sat throned, the worshippers fell prostrate ; “the voices and the instruments grew faint, then sank at once into an awful hush.”

But onwards still ; bright starry systems yet to see : so onwards in the serene ether.

Our poet stands again on the mountain's brow : the worship had ceased, the hymn had faded, the music had died away, the temple gates were closed, the glorious intelligences had departed. All was still ; the thistle's down floated on the gentle breeze.

Onwards they fly ; the sun sinks to a star, and then is lost in the distance ; they approach the dim wreck of a world ; its bright inhabitants lay as if in pleasant dreams, its forests remained entire, not a leaf had fallen—the rivers and the ocean were frozen—the magnificent cities uplifted their massive architecture to the heavens—every temple was perfect. All in one dark hour had perished : some were slumbering beside the crystal fountain, and some on the banks of a once murmuring lake. In the odoriferous gardens reposed a harper with his harp, and on his bosom the form of his own fair one—all fresh, all beautiful as if they were to wake at morn. No perfumes rose from the empurpled flowers ; there was no sound of falling waters ; the winds slept ; not a breeze stirred ; the air was “still as an icy sea.”

Again they wing their way, cleaving “the fathomless obscure.” The spirit-guide describes the creation of a starry system ; then ceased, and confusion seized our poet. Gigantic shapes seemed to mock, then passed away ; and beautiful forms came and soothed him ; these faded, and the silver crescent put on a darkness, and he swept on rapid pinions through the immensity of space. The fires and the lurid flames shot upwards, and sunk again ;

and there were roarings and bellowings as of some boundless sea. He stood before a glorious sun and its revolving planets ; and its intelligences sang a hymn to the spirit of eternal beauty ; then it mouldered away “in night and solitude.” He sped onwards, and the face of his radiant guide was oft turned on him, appearing like some full-orbed moon, but more beautiful and bright. Then came the new creation, with its matin song of peace and joy ; then all was wrapped in gloom, and there was a solemn pause. “All after was a blank,” a dim, dull blank, as if “life had been for years suspended.” He awoke, and—

The sea was whispering quietly beneath ;
The evening breeze was on the hills : and lo !
Just touching on the rim of the wide waters,
The sun himself, sinking in lonely grandeur.

PHILIP JAMES BAILEY.

SOME people are led to suppose that the long line of bards who have cast a lustre on the world's course will soon become extinct: that the genius of Poetry is about to plume his golden wings and leave us for a brighter sphere. They think that the divine art rose in those magnificent productions, fragments of which have come down to us, snatched from the spoils of Time; that it continued until it had reached its meridian splendour; that the galaxy of poets of the last age was the purple pomp of its departing glory; and that the sons of song who adorn the present day are but the rainbow hues which hover for awhile above the sunken luminary, and then fade away into the dusky twilight. But we feel assured that while there is a rainbow in the cloud, a star in the sky, or a blade of grass on the everlasting hills, there will be a Poet to hold mysterious commune with creation, and to point from Nature up to Nature's God: that while in this world of ours there is a smile of joy or a tear of woe, a holy love or a heavenward aspiration, a shattered hope or a buried flower, there will be a Poet to encourage suffering virtue, to fire flagging zeal, to denounce the proud op-

pressor, to assist the trampled slave, and to hymn in prophetic strains the pæan of a renovated earth.

We have been led to make these preliminary remarks by the book which is the principal subject of our present paper: and we conceive Festus to be, not only a triumphant vindication of the permanence of poetry, but also essentially *the* poem of the age. The author is eminently catholic in his spirit: he stands, as it were, “in the sun, and with no partial gaze views all creation.” The rolling world, with all its varied features, its mighty mountains and frowning forests, its verdant vales and sunny slopes, the melody of its woods and winds and waters, and the ten thousand diversities of loveliness which flash from its every recess, all minister to him. Lightning and tempest, hurricane and whirlwind, earthquake and volcano, war, famine, and wind-walking pestilence are obedient to his sway. The powers, passions, prejudices of mankind; love, hope, madness, exultation, despair; the past, the present, the future; Paradise and Pandemonium are subject to his scrutiny; he “exhausts old worlds, and then imagines new:”—

Existence sees him spurn her bounded reign,
And panting Time toils after him in vain.

We feel while reading this book like a man gazing upon the midnight heavens, or wandering in a wilderness of sweets—scarce knowing where to begin or how to analyze: our remarks therefore must be, like the flight of the dragon-fly, somewhat discursive.

Festus is essentially a true and an earnest book : the author's existence has not passed like a summer zephyr, fitted merely to "float among the lily bells and ruffle the rose :"—life in all its awful reality, in all its labyrinthine mazes, in all its ebb and flow of passion, in all its hidden meaning, has been written on his heart in characters of fire. He speaks of "youth as passionate genius, with all its flights and follies ;" he unfolds for us the human soul, "the sphynx-like heart, consistent in its inconsistency"—the powers therein contending for mastery—the world witching, the flesh fascinating, the devil dazzling but to destroy—now high up in its aspirations after the Eternal ; now back again to earth, basking in the beauty of her smile, and caring naught for fate or for the future. Festus is a type of mankind, but he is no ordinary mortal : vulgar temptations have no power upon him ; the lures which suffice to lead off secondary natures are as feeble to fetter him as the green withes to Sampson : but Love is the master-passion of his soul—a potent spirit which he cannot baffle : and when she flings her chains of flowers about him, he cannot choose but follow. The love of Festus is not that phase of the passion which we find possessed by those individuals who can sit down calmly and state the matter to themselves—balancing each consideration pro and con with the niceness of a banker or a bullion merchant, and letting their decision be regulated by the turning of a scale. Neither is it the ghastly phantom which personates God's image and leads its votaries on to death and

madness. No—it is a pure and spiritual passion, reared like the rainbow partly in heaven and partly on earth, and subsisting as a connecting link between the two : it is that intense perception of the loveliness of woman which none but a poetical imagination can conceive ; it is the rejoicing of the nature when “something in us says, Come let us worship beauty !”—it is the enthusiastic pilgrimage of the devotee to the shrine where he fondly deems he shall meet with a divinity, and where he hopes to shadow himself, although it be all silently as sits the brooding dove. It is a passion which now “tears the sea-like soul up by the roots and lashes it in scorn against the skies ;” and now passes off as gently as the last lines of sunset or the lingering close of a lovely melody. It is of necessity imperfect, chequered like the green sward with sunbeams and shadows of the clouds ; overshooting its mark by the headlong haste with which it draws the bow ; forgetful of the past and future—conscious only of the present ; prompting in its fiery flight acts, words, and feelings which the Tempter brings up like grim phantoms when the spent soul pauses to reflect. A passion like the great heaven overhead, which, however dimmed by clouds and fired by lightning, retains in storm and calm its own pure stainless majesty, and shines out clear at last.

Our author does not create for his readers an Arcadian scene of delicious sights and sounds ; where time is counted by golden sands, and the days pass off to the sound of moonlight music. He looks upon the world as it is, and presents it to us

in its veritable aspect : he sees the good within it, and loves it though the brand of sin be on its brow. He would not have earth's terrible magnificence and rugged grandeur melted down into forms of the fairest fashioning and most symmetrical proportions. He would not have the ocean ever calm, the skies ever blue, and the hills and valleys ever steeped in sunlight : for to him "terror hath a beauty even as mildness :" and he loves to walk abroad when the spirit of the storm is aroused and "volleys all his arrows off at once ;" when the thunder booms heavily along the arch of heaven ; and the stern strife and wild warfare of the elements reveal to him Nature in all her grandeur and sublimity. And as in the physical, so in the spiritual universe. He finds matter for elevation and improvement in the ebb and flow of tempestuous passions, when sorrow sweeps across the soul and crests its every wave with foam ; when love and woe are "ravelled and twined together into madness ;" in blighted hopes and severed affections and heart-breaking farewells ; in the voices of the distant and the dead ; and in the memory of seasons of happiness which are gone, not forgotten —past, not lost. He does not ignore the existence of sin and vice and crime, but he seeks to shew their meaning and their mission, their cause and consequence. He discerns the Deity not only in the fountains and the flowers, the woods, the waters, the nodding pines and the still stars of Heaven ;—but also in the revolutions of humanity, the varied aspects of mankind, wherever found.

He deems religion to be faith in God and a noble life, a high intent, a firm resolve, a calm reliance on the Universal King ; a love serene and holy, ruffled not in weal or woe ; undaunted and undazzled alike in storm and calm, in life and death. He sees and strives to help the feeble ray of light which glances with a fitful and inconstant flame among the ruins of the sin-bound soul ; deems that every aspiration, every struggle of the spirit, every attempt, however abortive, after excellence, is the Divinity in man, which, spite of opposing elements, shall burn up all its foes and stand revealed at last, pure and high. He bids us “ think on noble deeds and thoughts ever, count o'er the rosary of truth, and practice precepts which are proven wise.” He admires the Beautiful, wherever found, and bids us look through all to God : and blesses Him who gave the soul such boundless powers and winged it for such a flight. He reverences great men of every clime and creed, and asks not so much what they believed as what they did. He teaches us that Truth shall live and be triumphant though the world withstand : that empires and dynasties arise and fall as they are needed or their mission done : and that the world rolls onward to its final goal in blood and darkness, and in calm and peace—growing wiser by every circuit round the sun.

The book has no regular plot, but ranges life-like over a wide surface, and presents situations of the most striking contrast. We have scenes in Heaven followed by scenes on earth—in the air—in the planets—in Pandemonium : scenes of pas-

sionate love side by side with those of spiritual worship and of solitary meditation. Noble resolutions and stern continuings of the vanities of life are succeeded by feasts and follies, and the careless gaiety of one who seems resolved to sound the depths of pleasure, and if life be a burden, "to do his best to make it but the burden of a song." We have sublime discourses, elaborate arguments, descriptions of external nature and internal passion, instinct with the divinest poetry; and as foils to these we find "quips and quiddities," verses irresistibly comic, pages garlanded with the gayest wreaths that ever decorated joyous festival, bursting around us like a shower of fire-works, and sometimes passing off into absolute absurdity.

We are very much struck with our author's conception of Lucifer—it is the finest impersonation of evil with which we are acquainted. He is represented as adapting himself to all classes of society, and as being present, however well disguised, in every phase of life. He muses with the meditative soul over tomb-stones and ruined temples; he unfolds for those who thirst after knowledge, the records of antiquity and the mysteries of science; with the gay he is a dashing, sparkling boon-companion, and his presence irradiates the festive circle as a fire-fly the eastern heaven; with those "whose bliss, whose woe, whose life, whose all is love," he is the impassioned admirer, whose words are dipped in honey dew and feathered with celestial fancies. And then the work complete, the soul seduced and standing on the portals of eter-

nity, the tempter drops his mask, and with a bitter laugh taunts his poor victim, declares he shall be damned, "and has but served the purpose of the fiend." He knows his mission and steadily he works it out, though like the lightning it be "but to blind and slay." He feels himself with all his power only a permission of the Infinite, a thread in the loom of destiny; and so he carries on his schemes conscious that he strives against Omnipotence, and that his orbit is as fixed and fated as the everlasting stars.

The sole aim of the book is God the Father's glory, and an attempt to justify his ways to man. Whether our author's theory be correct or not we shall not here pronounce, but we must admit that he has shadowed forth the perfections of the Deity as completely as the nature of the subject will admit. The love to God is brought out in vivid contrast with the love of man:—the latter flashing out by fits, rapid, irregular—of the earth—earthy; the former ever resting high and calm above it, "as the stars o'er thunder:" the latter heaven-born and heaven-bound, but sheathed like the lightning in a cloud, having to struggle upward, losing itself in many a devious wandering, and dimming its lustre by many a dark descent; the former boundless and exhaustless, bending compassionately over its feeble offspring, and ever lifting and allying them with itself.

Respecting the poetry of Festus we cannot speak too highly—the magic of Bailey's verse is perfectly astonishing. We find frequently long sweeping

passages which carry the reader out of himself as it were on the wings of a whirlwind ; wave succeeding wave with marvellous rapidity, and still the climax is deferred, still the Poet pauses not and flags not to the final close, then leaves behind "a rocking and a ringing, glorious and momentary madness, might it last, and close the soul with Heaven as with a seal."

Images gathered from the four winds, from every science physical and psychical, are flung down as lavishly as sunbeams at the opening morn, or fire-hued leaves when Autumn sweeps across the trees. Here is no hoarding of wealth, no dexterous arrangement of similes to the best advantage ; but every turn reminds us of the lavish pomp and princely splendour which adorned the golden prime of good Haroun Alraschid. And there are little quiet home scenes and home feelings springing up ever and anon, as it were by the way, like wild violets, doubly sweet on account of their unexpected appearance and retiring beauty. And there are powerful appeals, soul-stirring sentiments, wisdom of world-wide significance, condensed like the thunderbolt into the smallest possible compass, and left to make their way and produce their impression by their own intrinsic power.

Festus is a book of too high an order to be popular with the masses ; too ethereal to find favour with the votaries of sense : but it commends itself to those to whom it has been given to read the mystic meaning of the universe and the "star-written prophecies of Heaven." It numbers those

among its followers who, in an age of Mammon-worship, have not bowed the knee to Baal—those who will not join in celebrating the sacrifice of all things pure and holy to the idol self. Its friends are the ardent, the generous, the enthusiastic; the souls that feed on beauty, as the flowers on dew; the hearts that hallow themselves by intercourse with nature; the minds that struggle upward, and for ever seek to sun themselves at the fount of light.

Reader! has the world ever seemed to thee but a waste wilderness of woe and sin? hast thou been gifted with a poetical imagination and forced by circumstances to take an active part in the stern battle of life? hast thou felt sick at heart, perceiving that thy path was uncongenial, thy companions unsympathizing, thy strength unequal to the strife? Hast thou been tempted to fling away thy high resolves, thy finer feelings; to "shed thy shining wings," and to become an earthling? Look up and hope, our Poet tells thee: keep true to the dream of thy youth; gladden thyself with the bright spots of humanity glinting out like glow-worms ever and anon; let thy "soul have a look southward, and be open to the whole noon of Nature;" use the talent that is given thee; do thy best to elevate thy fellow-men and raise their spirits sky-ward: and in so doing thou shalt be blest.

Hast thou been doomed to stand with all thy household gods shivered around thee—to see thy brilliant prospects fade away like fire-flies, and the grey dawn rise upon thee cold and comfortless? Does the funeral-bell strike up a mournful echo in

thy soul, telling thee in slow, sad murmurs of the loved and lost? Does the eventide awaken wildering recollections of the past, when the flush of morning was upon thee, and a guiding star beaconed thee to a brilliant future—a star that died upon the blue of Heaven—a future that shall never come? Look up and hope, our Poet tells thee: the world of spirit hovers round the world of sense—the fiery ordeal was sent to serve a purpose—the burning baptism shall be a blessing, and shall bring thee, if not now, yet certainly hereafter, peace. Art thou troubled that the still firmament of faith in which thou wast wont to move is dimmed? because thy spiritual vision is not as it was; because thou canst only now and then catch a glimpse of glory, which renders doubly dark the gloom which surrounds it? Look up and hope, our Poet bids thee:—

Time tells his tale by shadows, and by clouds
The wind records its progress, by dark doubts
The spirit swiftening on its heavenward course.

Keep thine eye upward—thy path onward, and thou shalt yet—

Re-rise from ruin,
High, holy, happy, stainless as a star,
Imperishable as eternity.

But we must hasten forward, and give but one glance in passing to The Angel World, our author's second work, which, though different in style and expression from the first; is still stamped with the features of the same mind that moulded Festus.

The one reminds us of the Sun donning his crown of light, marching in majesty through the heavens, illuminating the universe with the sparkles of his eye, and setting amid the clouds which have been the accompaniments of his course and are the ornaments of his close : the other is like "a night of stars, wherein the memory of the day seems trembling through the meditative air." The one is an Æolian harp, wide as the welkin, where the winds come and go and make wild music : the other is a silver symphony, a seraph song, a moonlight melody of breeze and billow. The one is the battle of good and evil related by an actor in the drama, who has come off from the contest with scars of many wounds upon him : the other is the same scene described by the shining ones that walk upon the golden battlements, that aid the wounded warrior, and crown the conqueror with wreaths that never fade.

And now we must conclude our paper : pleasantly have we sheltered ourselves awhile among the bowers of song, and refreshed our spirits by this temporary sojourn under the palm-trees in the desert. We love dream-land and cloud-land which are the true and inner life, the heaven that never dims the lustre of its eye ; the fount that never fails : but we are reminded that we must be up, and take a part once more in the battle and the march. We go with a heart all the stronger and a courage all the higher for our discourse with thee of Festus and his wonder-world of song.

ROBERT BLAIR.

THE life of Blair is deficient in all those striking events which cast around the works of an author a deeper feeling of interest: his days, which were passed happily away in the discharge of pastoral duties, remind one of some flowery spot on which the slant rays of the western-sun fall, making it golden with beauty. He was born in 1699; studied in the University of Edinburgh; visited the Continent; in 1731, was ordained, and appointed to the parish of Athelstaneford. He was a man of much learning and taste, and to these he added sincere piety. He laboured quietly among his flock till 1746, when death gave him to the eternal world.

The production on which his immortality rests was published some three years before his death, after having received considerable alterations from Doddridge. It immediately passed through several editions, and has since become a standard work. "The eighteenth century has produced few specimens of blank verse of so powerful and simple a character as that of *The Grave*. It is a popular poem, not merely because it is religious, but because its language and imagery are free, natural, and picturesque. The latest editor of the poets

has, with singularly bad taste, noted some of this author's most nervous and expressive phrases as vulgarisms, among which he reckons that of 'Friendship, the solder of society.' Blair may be a homely and even a gloomy poet in the eye of fastidious criticism; but there is a masculine and pronounced character even in his gloom and homeliness that keeps it most distinctly apart from either dulness or vulgarity. His style pleases us like the powerful expression of a countenance without regular beauty.'

The grave is ever to man a gloomy subject: and even when illumined by the bright sunshine of heaven, it retains much of its darkness. To leave the earth, with its sweetly scented flowers, and luxuriant forests, and verdant dales, and grassy meadows, and wide-extended heaths, with their golden gorse, and snow-white hare-bell, and yellow primrose; to leave our native land, with its multitude of silver brooks, and its mouldering ruins, and its beautiful churches, and its magnificent abbeys, and its fine deep associations, and its pleasant memories; to leave the enchanting creation of poet and of painter, and their bowers of tenderness and truth; to leave our native hills, where we were born and brought up, and picked the violet and the butter-cup, and bared our brow to the open winds; to leave those around whose hearts the fibres of our own are entwined, and to forget their radiant faces, and their affectionate welcomes, and their constant care; to leave our wives and our little ones, is not only a solemn but a bitter thing. It is not pala-

table to humanity ; it needs all the revelations of the Eternal to dispel its dark, black clouds. Naturally we hate and abhor death : to look upon it with any other feeling than that of horror, we require the spiritual breathing of the Holy One : and, indeed, the rich consolation of his mercy, and the unsullied perfection and bliss of the promised inheritance, are scarcely able to deprive the sting of its poison. The majesty and grandeur of that everlasting realm, the hallowed and unruffled felicity of its inhabitants, the unclouded blue of its sky, the eternity of its delights, the absence of all decay, the exquisite softness and tremendous sublimity of its music, and the immaculate beauty of the ever-present Deity are scarcely sufficient to rob death of its heart-rending sorrows.

It is natural to man to love the earth ; it is natural that his sympathies should be linked with its varied scenery ; on it he first drew breath and gazed on the face of creation, beautiful as the blushing countenance of a bride, and bright as the glory of the Everlasting ; on it he felt the gushing of full-hearted affection, and its trees and skies have seen his joyance and gambols in youthful happiness ; and beneath his parent's roof he sang hymns to Jesus, and folded his little hands together in prayer to the Most High ; and as he grew older, the dim loveliness of its evenings has witnessed his vows and assignations, and firm, unchanging faith : and his home is here, that temple of hallowed charms. It is no wonder, then, that man looks on death as a terrible foe : it, indeed, may give more

than it takes ; it may bestow an abode of tranquil peace and unfading sweetness, but for awhile it robs him of those precious beings whose voices are as the voice of God.

Nor are we able even to banish the recollection of the curse ; it haunts us everywhere ; it ever abides with us ; if we go, it follows ; if we lie down, it too lies down with us : no time, no place, no station is proof against its assaults ; it ever stares us in the face ; it mingles in all we do and say : in the festive scene it comes ; in the almost roofless hut it departs not.

The Scriptures alone unravel the mystery ; they alone breathe comfort, they alone shed light. We indeed have oftentimes endeavoured to deepen that mystery—to stay that comfort—to darken that light : we have spiritualized too much ; our bold outlines and strong features are lost in some dim, ethereal air. To a man who loves the vast creation, whose soul is attuned to its divine melody, whose spirit is alive to its every change, and whose thoughts kindle at the magnificence of the starry heavens, and who melts into a tranquil softness whilst gazing on the grey streak of early dawn, or the crimson glories of the setting-sun, and whose mind is enchanted with the exquisite mechanism displayed in the smallest flower and the tiniest insect, to such a man what cold consolation he must receive when the preacher tells him that all these beautiful works of the Eternal will be swept away at death, and that in the new world there is neither tree, nor herb, nor shrub ; he would,

doubtless, if this were true, prefer the earth, sinful and sadly fallen as it is, to the bright heaven where hill and dale have no place. But if you tell him, as the Scriptures tell, that there will be the rippling stream, but far more clear ; and green meadows, but far more refreshing to the eye ; and lofty mountains, but far more gigantic ; and shady dells, but far more lonely and still ; and rolling oceans, but far more sublime ; and sunset and sunrise, but far more gorgeous and magnificent ; and the boundless expanse stretching itself into infinitude overhead, but far more profound ; and delicious and solemn minstrelsies, but far more thrilling than those of this lower orb, you will stir up within him his very heart, and he will pant for heaven ; he will have something to grasp at, something tangible. In his hours of unrest and anxiety will the thought cheer his drooping soul ; and the fair loveliness of that nature which he sees and regards will teach him something of those coming glories and those coming joys.

To a man who has given up his whole heart to the tender bliss of domestic life, of what comfort is it to say that there is a happier land above, where all is a deep, hallowed blessedness of peace, but where domestic loves will be for ever severed ? It may be, and doubtless is true, that our love to God will be the grand moving principle of the soul ; every thought will tower upwards, and every affection fix itself upon Him. But think we friendship and still nearer and dearer ties will be unknown ? Think we that those relationships which

bind our homes with the flowers of paradise, and which give to our lips the nectar of Eden, will be altogether banished, and altogether exiled there? No: there may, indeed, be no marriage-bond; but there will be instead that boundless and unutterable ecstacy of bliss which is oftentimes felt on earth; there will be that outbursting and ever-kindling tenderness of word and look which renders this world even now not unconnected with the skies. And inasmuch as the heart will be holier and better, will those affections and loves gather a diviner beauty and a diviner vigour. We think, then, it is somewhat perilous to say that all such delights will be reft away at death: nor do we deem it in any way a measure calculated to increase the healthy spirituality of the soul. No one of the faculties will be destroyed; they will be purged, indeed, and purified, but they will still remain; they will become more sensibly alive to pleasure, and more keenly sensitive of joy. Because we are to have no tears and no sorrows, are we on that account to be for ever shut out from the beautiful creation of our God, and all the profound felicity of tender friendship and devoted affection? Are the heavens to depart with their million stars, and the ocean with its multitude of waters? Is there no tracery of skill in the Maker's handiwork, and is it too material and low-born to grace the abode of the blessed? The labours of the Eternal are worthy of his power and wisdom, and shall they sink into "utter nothing" and dire annihilation? If He himself found delight in their charms,

shall we be too lofty and too spiritual to stoop and reap a kindred joy? If the Lord Jehovah pronounced them very good, shall we not, whilst eyeing their manifold graces, breathe out the same expression of praise? If the bright sons of the morning burst forth into hymnings, divine as their own existence, at the pristine loveliness of our earth, shall we, who are lower in the scale of intellectual, and perhaps moral, greatness, be too high and too holy to send up our lively songs and low warblings of admiration?

Now let these features of that land to which we are all tending be frequently and fully dwelt upon in the pulpit; and instead of that vagueness, and dimness, and mystery which so generally characterize our descriptions of heaven let such outlines as these be filled up, and we shall see death stripped of much of its bitter and poisonous nightshade. Shall we drink the juice of the hemlock when we may have the golden nectar?—shall we love the foggy November morning better than the resplendent dawn of May?—cling we to the glimmering starlight rather than to the resplendent sunlight?—choose we the turbid waters of a pool into which the dashing rain beats down, stirring up its mud and filth, rather than the waters of life, which are already streaked with the brightness of the coming glory?

We know well that Christ will be all in all; that in his presence is the highest heaven. But surely none can blame us, if when we are told that a flower cannot bloom, nor a star twinkle in that

world, we shrink back again to our own earth. Let us know that we are hastening to a region where friendship and faithful love are eternal, and where the soft sighing of the evening gale is not unheard, and our thoughts will be elevated and our mind exalted ; it would engross our attention, and imagination would be ever winging itself far upwards into those scenes of unsullied purity ; our heart would fix its deepest and tenderest affections there ; and what refreshment in weariness, what joy in grief, what happiness in sorrow would be ours ! And this present existence would be lighted up with the radiance of heaven, and this present being gladdened with the brilliancy of the eternal throne, and the grave would be despoiled of its gigantic power.

Blair has treated the subject at times much in the bold outline and masculine thought of Shakespeare. A single expression, as the sweet-worded Willmott well observes, often throws a blaze of genius over a line. There is great solemnity and sublimity in many of his passages. As a whole, however, it is not masterly : it rather shines in fragments. What, indeed, can be finer than this :—

See yonder hallowed fane ! the pious work
Of names once famed, now dubious or forgot,
And buried 'midst the wreck of things which were ;
There lie interred the more illustrious dead.
The wind is up : hark ! how it howls ! methinks
Till now I never heard a sound so dreary.
Doors creek, and windows clap, and night's foul bird
Rooked in the spire screams loud, the gloomy aisles
Black-plastered, and hung round with shreds of scutcheons

And tattered coats of arms, send back the sound,
 Laden with heavier airs, from low vaults,
 The mansions of the dead ! Roused from their slumbers,
 In grim array the grisly spectres rise,
 Grin horrible, and obstinately sullen,
 Pass and repass, hushed as the foot of night !
 Again the screech-owl shrieks—ungracious sound !
 I'll hear no more ; it makes one's blood run chill.
 Quite round the pile, a row of reverend elms,
 Coeval near with that, all ragged show,
 Long lashed by the rude winds : some rift half down
 Their branchless trunks, others so thin a top
 That scarce two crows could lodge in the same tree.

Strange things, the neighbours say, have happened here ;
 Wild shrieks have issued from the hollow tombs ;
 Dead men have come again and walked about ;
 And the great bell has tolled, unrung, untouched !
 Such tales their cheer, at wake or gossiping,
 When it draws near the witching time of night.

Nor is the following description of a schoolboy returning home at evening less striking :—

Oft in the lone churchyard at night I've seen,
 By glimpse of moonshine, chequering through the trees,
 The schoolboy, with his satchel in his hand,
 Whistling aloud to keep his courage up,
 And lightly tripping o'er the long flat stones
 (With nettles skirted and with moss o'ergrown)
 That tell in homely phrase who lies below.
 Sudden he starts ! and hears, or thinks he hears,
 The sound of something purring at his heels.
 Full fast he flies, and dares not look behind,
 Till, out of breath, he overtakes his fellows,
 Who gather round, and wonder at the tale
 Of horrid apparition, tall and ghastly,
 That walks at dead of night, or takes his stand
 O'er some new-opened grave, and (strange to tell)
 Evanishes at crowing of the cock.

The love of the supernatural is an ingredient in

every mind ; we all give much of our regard to the mysterious and marvellous ; and when the light breaks in, dispelling the darkness, there is a feeling of sorrow and regret. There is something in the nature of every man which delights in the wonderful ; and perhaps there is nothing, from infancy to old age, which yields us greater enjoyment than sitting at evening around some blazing hearth, telling of apparitions and appearances of unseen realities. We feel dread while such tales linger on the lips : every sound startles, every fancied noise terrifies, every gust of wind affrights, every sudden flare of the fire, and every flicker of the candle, and every shadow cast upon the wall intimidates ; still we cannot forego their deep and thrilling charms ; we listen with intense interest—there is a fascination which we cannot overcome, and a sorcery which we cannot withstand.

“ The portrait of the rich man, abandoned to the enjoyment of his possessions, and suddenly surprised by the approach of death, is conceived with a fearful solemnity, not unlike that which characterized some of our earlier divines. It might, indeed, have been imitated by Blair from the Eumenides of *Æschylus*, the magnificent comparison of human life to a torrent, in one of the sermons of Bossuet, or from a passage in the *Alexander* of Lee, with whose tragedies he seems to have been familiar :”—

In that dread moment, how the frantic soul
Raves round the walls of her clay tenement—
Runs to each avenue, and shrieks for help,
But shrieks in vain ! How wistfully she looks

On all she's leaving, now no longer hers !
 A little longer, yet a little longer,
 Oh ! might she stay to wash away her stains,
 And fit her for her passage. Mournful sight,
 Her very eyes weep blood ; and every groan
 She heaves is big with horror. But the foe,
 Like a staunch murderer, steady to his purpose,
 Pursues her close through every lane of life,
 Nor misses once the track, but presses on ;
 Till, forced at last to the tremendous verge,
 At once she sinks to everlasting ruin !

In fine relief to this is the exquisite description
 of a Christian's death-bed :—

Sure the last end

Of the good man is peace ! How calm his exit !
 Night dews fall not more gently to the ground,
 Nor weary, worn-out winds expire so soft.
 Behold him in the evening-tide of life,
 A life well spent, whose early care it was
 His riper years should not upbraid his green :
 By unperceived degrees he wears away ;
 Yet, like the sun, seems larger at his setting.
 High in his faith and hopes, look how he reaches
 After the prize in view ! and, like a bird
 That's hampered, struggles hard to get away :
 While the glad gates of sight are wide expanded
 To let new glories in, the first fair fruits
 Of the fast-coming harvest ! Then, oh, then,
 Each earth-born joy grows vile, or disappears,
 Shrunk to a thing of naught. Oh, how he longs
 To have his passport signed and be dismissed !
 'Tis done, and now he's happy ; the glad soul
 Has not a wish uncrowned. E'en the lag flesh
 Rests, too, in hope of meeting once again
 Its better half, never to sunder more.

Two such sketches are enough to stamp immortality on any man : the rushing torrent and impe-

tuous waterfall are characteristic of the one ; the gentle stream and limpid brook, of the other.

What tenderness is here :—

Invidious grave ! how dost thou rend in sunder
Whom love has knit, and sympathy made one—
A tie more stubborn far than Nature's band.
Friendship ! mysterious cement of the soul,
Sweetener of life, and solder of society,
I owe thee much ; thou hast deserved from me
Far, far beyond what I can ever pay.
Oft have I proved the labours of thy love,
And the warm efforts of the gentle heart,
Anxious to please. Oh ! when my friend and I,
In some thick wood have wandered heedless on,
Hid from the vulgar eye, and sat us down
Upon the sloping cowslip-covered bank,
Where the pure limpid stream has slid along
In grateful errors through the underwood,
Sweet murmuring, methought the shrill-tongued thrush
Mended his song of love ; the sooty blackbird
Mellowed his pipe, and softened every note ;
The eglantine smelled sweeter, and the rose
Assumed a dye more deep ; whilst every flower
Vied with its fellow-plant in luxury
Of dress. Oh, then the longest summer's day
Seemed too, too much in haste ; still, the full heart
Had not imparted half—'twas happiness
Too exquisite to last. Of joys departed,
Not to return, how painful the remembrance !

W. L. BOWLES.

A PENSIVE youth has just entered Trinity ; the college-book bears his signature and the date 17—. He seems to think of home and home's blessedness ; there is strangeness here ; fine associations truly crowd around, but still he feels lonely. No wonder : we all feel solitary when first leaving that nest of sweetnesse.

In a strange city, the city of the beautiful—once see Oxford, and you love it for ever !—our poet strolls out to look on cloister, chapel, and ivied wall : novelty may for a time dispel his thoughts of home ; Magdalen's tower there rising beside the bridge and limpid stream—some centuries back, and from its top came the low, solemn voice of prayer, as the fresh May dawned. He rambles in the Merton gardens, and ever and anon catches a glimpse of the ancient pile ; how his eye kindles whilst gazing on the magnificence of Christ Church, the grandeur of All-Soul's oratory, and the enchanting opening from the Botanic gate !—and St. John's, and Alban's, and Oriel, and Wadham would claim his praise ; and what rich-toned memories of Bernard Gilpin, and Hooker, and Chillingworth, and Evelyn, and Sir Walter Raleigh, and a whole phalanx of bright spirits !

He wanders, one sweet April day, along the banks of Isis ; the leaves, with their sunny green, are just sprinkling the tree-tops with beauty ; the air is calm and gentle, and there is a dainty loneliness on his spirit ; he sends forward his thoughts to that hallowed hour when, in the full outpouring of his love, he will stand at God's altar ; and then come dreams of the secluded village and its white cottages adorned with vine and scarlet fuschia—dreams of its old ancestral hall, and its hoary avenue of elms, and its dark plantation, stretching over many a hill—dreams of its low but beautiful parsonage, with its rose-clustered walls, and its inward peace, and quietude, and blessedness—dreams of its simple church, rearing its ancient tower against the summer twilight.

And thus strolling onwards, he pleased himself, and oftentimes did he feel these blessed scenes in harmony with the fair sweetness of the surrounding existence. Dreaming, he passed by the pink-lipped daisy, and forgot the cowslip ; there was the scent of fresh green grass, and the meadows looked gay with the golden buttercup ; but his eye was far away, even in the vision of future blessedness : he saw not creation's beauty—heard not creation's melody.

Some eighteen months ere he is to breast the world's storm, two gentle spirits enter his room : he himself felt weak and sickly ; they had come to give hallowed comfort ; all three looking forward to the church—their purest joy to minister therein.

It will be quite sweet to be thus among our

people, continues one—there will be the quiet home, with many a flower budding in its latticed window, and its chaste and holy peace. I should love such a place—just a few pretty cottages and two or three fine old Elizabethan mansions, and then the little church standing on a grassy knoll ; this would be very sweet, and one might spend therein his days ; we could read Chaucer, and Herrick, and many a lover of nature's beauty, and the years would glide so smoothly, and all so calmly, it would make up for the dreariness of our college-life. Soon, we shall have taken our degree, and then for the hallowed enjoyment of labouring in the vineyard of Christ ; prune the grapes—train the grapes to look upwards on the sun—pluck the grapes ; it will be very delightful.

So Bowles and his companions thought. “ Let none wonder at an Idyllic reign or Arcadian world in a little village and humble parsonage. A tulip-tree, whose flower-branches shall overshadow the whole garden, may grow in the smallest bed, and the life-giving air of joy can be breathed from a window as well as in the wide wood under the broad heaven.” No doubt the poet recollect ed through many a year the sweet silvery tones of the one, and the more pensive and less dreamy speech of the other. It would be a delicious memory.

Tears on that pale cheek—tears, tears. It is the trial-hour. He would press his hand on fleeting Time and stay its flight : but no, it speeds away, bearing on its wing his own beloved. Weep, weep ;

what else can he do? Weep, weep, night and day: weep for ever!

He enters his solitary chamber one evening, and as the last golden rays throw their fading brightness on his window, he gazes pensively out on tree and flower and cloud, and fancies that death has not really come. He tries to imagine she he loved is near him, and putting his hand behind, as if for her soft, gentle pressure, he waits in the fond hope that it may still be grasped; and the twilight becomes more solemn, and his feeling more saddened, and his thoughts more melancholy; and, in a wail of grief, he wakes to find himself alone—alone.

That pensive youth stands on yon hill which overlooks the ancient Dover: the castle rises on a bank to his left; the sea is rolling all before. In the distance, the cliffs of Calais are beaming in the glare of the setting sun: a white sail here and there on the surging waters; all else quiet and hushed. There is the “blessed zephyr-calm of the evening;” the twinkling star will soon be “reflected in the dew of the violet.” One would think this the hour of weeping; the delicious vesper hour, when we may recal the “blue spot in the cloud-heaven of life,” when comes the “one pale little remembrance, like the earliest and frailest of snowdrops, from the fresh soil of childhood.” This youth looked on the serene eventide, and thought of her he loved, and wept deeply. “Even in tears,” says Hegel, “lies consolation.” And we would deem tears the holiest acknowledgment of the still hour, “the swan-song of the day:” tears,

tears—liquid tears, seem in sweetest harmony with the hallowed time. “The softened earthly can unite itself with the heavenly, and this again with a softened humanity.” Thus Schelling.

The throbbing burst is over ; there is the placid grief. His heart pours out its plaintive warblings ; there is relief : he recals every sweet event, every fond endearment, every still hour of blessedness ; he lingers over the path once so sunlit ; it had seemed to lead onwards to the beautiful and true ; it may lead there yet ! “The nyctanthes sorrowful spreads its fragrance after dusk.” Gazing out of his college-window—for he had now returned to the holy city—on the profound calm of evening, he feels as one all lonely, and far off from peace ; and yet there is an undefined sweetness within,—a divine, melancholy sweetness. “The Indian bees hum themselves asleep at eve in the blue blossoms of the nilica or sephalica.” He takes up the snow-white paper, and looking on the precious letters of his beloved, writes sonnet after sonnet.

In a few months, and he will print. Some college debts press heavily : this may clear them. His spirit is stirred with high hopes ; to be read by others, to nerve the soul, to throw beauty over the landscape, a dim pensive beauty, like the “rainbow over the cloudy morning of life,” born in the storm, nestled in the tempest—and yet a rainbow still, spanning the wide hemisphere, and casting loveliness on church, and cot, and meadow, and tree, and reflecting its exquisite colours in the little wild flower.

His hopes wax and wane : he will publish, and then he will not ; changes ever chequer the mild sunlight of his bosom : there is music, and then discord ; sometimes he catches the delicious tones of melody, and he is strengthened ; at others, naught save the harsh breathing of untuned notes. Oh, who knows what the poet suffers ere his cherished thoughts meet the world's gaze !

They at last are printed ; the youth's eye glistens with light when he beholds his first-born. He had wept ; but there is now the joy-glance.

Perchance you have seen, O reader, the fine hospital of Christ, standing not far distant from the martyr-spot, noted in Queen Mary's days. Among its learners these poems have found a spirit who will cherish them.

Such sweet pensive hymns ; have you seen them ? So tender and yet so manly ; quite delicious, amid our cold and cheerless study. Light, heaven, beaming again upon us ; and music, hallowed music too. We can bear it now—bear it all : but it will soon come, even the free vacation—then fields, then brooks, then skies, then voice of creation, and voice of God ! Home, too, that blessed nook wherein blossoms all things lovely and holy. I will write these plaintive strains ; you shall hear them : me they have soothed, and I can toil again ; yes, even go to the unintellectual task, having learnt how hard it is to check the full outburst of the soul. To-morrow, and a copy shall be yours.

Thus Coleridge, his large eye flashing with enthusiasm. The blue-coat boys deemed him strange,

and pitied him, and told their parents when they returned home how he loved the gentle heaven-dipped violet, and loved to dream, whole days together, beneath the clear blue sky ; and how he ever talked of buttercups and daisies and everlasting beauty.

Bowles little thought that one wild spirit was thus cleaving to him, and listening so intensely to his sweet, silvery strain. Joy in thy strain, it will yet soothe many into gentleness !

A beautiful home in Wiltshire : two venerable forms stand leaning over the garden-gate : there is the scent of the rose and hawthorn : a tear trickles down the cheek of that old man, Forty years ago, and the other, pacing the streets of Bristol, was thinking over the sweetness of a youth's poetry, and was determining to hymn the song himself. Many strange events during that long interval. Europe heaves to her centre :—heaves, and again is still. Carnage, and plague, and heroism, and the war-music !—there seems naught save these. How eloquently bright the stars ! Wept they when gazing on the dread earth ? But voices : listen, voices. Schiller and Schelling breathe placid stillness, while they speak the god-like ; Richter, and Herder, and Wieland, so soft, and tender, and liquid in their romantic dreams ; Goethe, lofty and magnificent ; and Fichte, higher, and wilder, and more daring yet. Voices, voices on the dark battle-field of the old world !

Convulsion, discord, ruin, sweep over the huge continent. Chaos, chaos !—humanity broken and

overthrown, and lying in chains. Ah, the moon gleamed down on the shattered divine!—thrones no longer diamond-blazed: thrones, thrones dashed in blood. Dark days, dark eves, dark heavens; no glimmer of the blessed light. Men weep and mourn, and deem the free forgotten. But voices, voices: listen, voices! they sing of the beautiful and true and restored humanity. It shall grow up into the Holy; and the vast desolate plain shall smile with gentle loveliness; and there shall be everlasting sweetness, and everlasting peace.

Passing—passing away, the din and carnage. There will be joy in hall and cottage yet; joy, bright-beaming, blessed joy! and the peasant shall kneel and pray for the monarch, and the monarch shall protect the peasant. Joy once more—joy, joy, and happiness! And now Southey looks—for it is he—on the quiet parsonage, and the face of that first-loved friend, and bids a sorrowful farewell.

But to the poems. They display much elegance and beauty; they breathe the “soul of melancholy gentleness;” “soft as the last drops round heaven’s airy bow.” They move strangely the feelings; they touch deeply the heart; they shape the spirit to their own image, mould it to their own form; they cast their dim shadows over the mind: there is a quiet loneliness. Their sad, sweet melody stills every tumultuous passion, tranquillizes every throbbing desire. How exquisite is this:—

How blest with thee the path could I have trod
Of quiet life, above cold want’s hard fate,
And little wishing more—nor of the great

Envious, or their proud name ! but it pleased God
 To take thee to his mercy : thou didst go
 In youth and beauty, go to thy death-bed ;
 E'en whilst on dreams of bliss we fondly fed,
 Of years to come of comfort ! Be it so ;
 Ere this I have felt sorrow ; and even now —
 Though sometimes the unbidden thought must start
 And half unman the miserable heart —
 The cold dew I shall wipe from my sad brow,
 And say, since hopes of bliss on earth are vain,
 Best friend, farewell, till we do meet again.

The spirit is deeply moved whilst perusing such lines as these : their influence is gentle, yet powerful. We feel a pensive sadness ; it clings to our sunniest hours and our sunniest joys ; “it comes over the mind like a slow and solemn strain of music.” The bright, clear sky and the empurpled flowers of summer become tinged with a sombre melancholy. Again, how purely sweet is this :—

How shall I meet thee, Summer, wont to fill
 My heart with gladness, when thy pleasant tide
 First came, and on each coomb’s romantic side
 Was heard the distant cuckoo’s hollow bill ?
 Fresh flowers shall fringe the wild brink of the stream,
 As with the songs of joyance and of hope
 The hedge-rows shall ring loud, and on the slope
 The poplars sparkle in the transient beam ;
 The shrubs and laurels which I loved to tend,
 Thinking their May-tide fragrance might delight
 With many a peaceful charm, thee my best friend,
 Shall put forth their green-shoots and cheer the sight :
 But I shall mark their hues with sick’ning eyes,
 And weep for her who in the cold grave lies.

It seems the last dying cadence of the Vaucluse strain, so exquisitely pensive are its tones. How

full of expression is the following, on beholding once again the clear silvery Itchin :—

Itchin, when I behold thy banks again,
 Thy crumbling margin, and thy silver breast,
 On which the self-same tints still seem to rest,
 Why feels my heart the shivering sense of pain?
 Is it—that many a summer's day has passed
 Since, in life's morn, I carolled on thy side?
 Is it, that oft, since then, my heart has sighed,
 As Youth and Hope's delusive dreams flew fast?
 Is it, that those, who circled on thy shore,
 Companions of my youth, now meet no more?
 Whate'er the cause, upon thy banks I bend
 Sorrowing, yet feel such solace at my heart
 As at the meeting of some long-lost friend,
 From whom in happier hours we wept to part.

Again :—

As o'er these hills I take my silent rounds,
 Still on that vision which is flown I dwell!
 On images I loved, alas, how well!
 Now past, and but remembered like sweet sounds
 Of yesterday! Yet in my breast I keep
 Such recollections, painful though they seem,
 And hours of joy retrace, till from my dream
 I wake, and find them not: then I could weep
 To think that Time so soon each sweet devours,
 To think so soon life's first endearments fail,
 And we are still misled by Hope's smooth tale!
 Who, like a flatterer, when the happiest hours
 Are past, and most we wish her cheering lay,
 Will fly, as faithless and as fleet as they!

Such strains bear on their bosom the melancholy whisperings of the cold and quiet tomb ; they produce within us thoughts too deep for utterance. The same pensive beauty marks the other poems of our author ; and it is this, we think, that gives

them their peculiar value. How sweetly has he described the season when first he heard the sound of ocean's rolling waters, and when first he saw it sparkling beneath the sunbeams :—

I was a child when first I heard the sound
Of the great sea!—'twas night, and journeying far,
We were belated on our road, 'mid scenes
New and unknown—a mother and her child,
Now first in this wide world a wanderer.
My father came, the pastor of the church
That crowns the high hill crest above the sea;
When, as the wheels went slow, and the still wind
Seemed listening, a low murmuring met the ear,
Not of the winds—my mother softly said,
“Listen! it is the sea.” With breathless awe
I heard the sound, and closer pressed her hand.
That night I restless passed—“the sea!”
Filled all my thoughts; and when slow morning came,
And the first sun-beam streaked the window-pane,
I rose unnoticed, and with stealthy pace—
Straggling along the village-green—explored
Alone my fearful but adventurous way;
When having turned the hedge-row, I beheld
For the first time thy glorious element,
Old ocean, glittering to the beams of morn,
Stretching far off, and westward without bound,
Amid thy sole dominion rocking loud!
Shivering I stood and tearful! and even now—
When gathering years have marked my look—even now,
I feel the deep impression of that hour,
As but of yesterday.

This is natural, and therefore beautiful. The manner of telling this simple incident is such that we become deeply interested in the mother and her child; we wish to know more of them; we feel them to be part of the family of man; we almost behold the night, with its winds sweeping ever and

anon, and its belated travellers. A low murmuring is heard—the parent softly whispers—“Listen ! it is the sea”—the youthful poet clings closer, and presses more warmly her hand. Equally touching is the following :—

Though my hours
—For I have drooped beneath life's early showers—
Pass lonely oft, and oft my heart is sad,
Yet I can leave the world, and feel most glad
To meet thee, Evening, here ; here my own hand
Has decked with trees and shrubs the slopes around,
And whilst the leaves by dying airs are fanned,
Sweet to my spirit comes the farewell sound,
That seems to say—“Forget the transient tear
Thy pale youth shed,—repose and peace are here.”

Nor is this less beautiful :—

Fair moon ! thou at the chilly day's decline
Of sharp December, through my cottage pane
Dost lovely look, smiling, though in thy wane ;
In thought, to scenes serene and still as thine,
Wanders my heart, whilst I by turns survey
Thee slowly wheeling on thy evening way ;
And this my fire, whose dim, unequal light,
Just glimmering, bids each shadowy image fall
Sombrous and strange upon the darkening wall,
Ere the clear tapers chase the deepening night,
Yet thy still orb, seen through the freezing haze,
Shines calm and clear without ; and whilst I gaze
I think—around me in this twilight room—
I but remark mortality's sad gloom ;
Whilst hope and joy cloudless and soft appear
In the sweet beam that lights thy distant sphere !

It is pleasant thus to sit by one's solitary fireside on a winter's evening, and as night's shadows deepen, to feel somewhat of our poet's melancholy. There is a loneliness about moon, and star, and

sky—a stillness—a pensive loveliness. The soft, silvery beams throw their tranquil light on the windows; the fire blazes, sinks, falls—brightens again; our shadows appear and disappear on the wall. Not a breath stirs without; every leaf and every flower, and even the long, deep grass moves not. We watch the rising and the sinking flame: in a half-meditative mood, we think of former years, and then form churches and mansions in the red cinders, and feel, with Beaumont and Fletcher, “Nothing so dainty sweet as lonely melancholy.”

Yea, there is a twilight of the soul, when the hopes of youth have passed away; when the friends who smiled on our infancy have gone down to the grave; when the companions of later years have departed from us, as the ship is loosened from the shore; and when we stand almost the solitary being of a generation: but it is a twilight preluding the fresh and resplendent morning. We may be bereft of all former delights that our spirit may rise with a lighter bound into the radiance of heaven. The everlasting sun breaks on the horizon; he swells upwards in glory and majesty; his resplendent beams scatter the former dimness; the gloomy shadows are dispelled; every cloud is rolled backwards; every darkness is dissipated; our countenance is illumined with the sublime verity that man can never die: through the blood of Jesus he lives. We look across the stream which separates this world from the next: the willow and the weeping ash bend low with their foliage on this side the waters; the myrtle and the rose glance in the sun-

shine on the other. We think of the fair beauty of that clime ; already its odours pass pleasantly by us—there is the clematis, and the blue violet, and the eglantine ; they are sweet on earth—they are sweeter there. Flowers, they tell of everlasting spring. We strolled through a village the other day ; it was the month of February, but the pure cerulean sky and the balmy winds were not of winter ; in a window of a pretty cottage stood many a modest flower ; to look at them was as if heaven had been revealed ; they were encircled with a thousand associations ; they awakened the sleeping sensibilities of the heart ; they called up delicious dreams : there was the yellow star-shaped primrose, and it told of verdant glades, and long, wild lanes, and venerable churches on mossy banks, and all the enchanting loveliness of summer. They reminded us of those we loved, and our bosom was softened into peace, tranquil as the calm of Paradise ; and thus, as the shadows of evening steal onwards, do we look forward to an everlasting daybreak and an everlasting morning ; and that dawn shall kindle ere long on our spirit, and the scent of a million flowers, and the singing of myriad birds, and the divine hymns of immortal intelligences, and the welcome of kinsmen, and the smile of tenderness, and the unsullied bliss shall burst forth on our changed and renovated condition !

This hope has soothed us in such hours ; we feel our inextinguishable existence ; the seeds of decay are impregnated with the waters of life ; the full roll of eventide has sung to us of the better land ;

we cling to the knowledge—we cleave to the revelation ; there is light, as of heaven, in the sunny truth. Overcome with sorrow, and laden with grief, yet loving to dwell upon it, our spirit takes comfort from the thought that the tear falls not, and the broken sigh escapes not, in the brighter world beyond. The twilight becomes an opener of unseen sweets—the revealer of invisible joys ; it, indeed, tells us of the dim and shadowy ; but it also chants a hymn to the unsullied purity of that fair clime which stretches far onwards from the confines of the grave. The realities of the Eternal are brought before us ; they shine out as stars shine out in darkness ; they breathe a delicious perfume, as the honeysuckle breathes its richest odours when the evening dews descend ; we hold communion with them ; there is a deep, thrilling converse—an ethereal power exercises dominion ; with the subjugation we become exalted ; unearthly tidings greet us—unearthly scenes arise : then are there throbings of inexpressible bliss—throbings of everlasting hope.

Our poet's verses on a sun-dial are in his best manner ; they recall to our remembrance a scene of youth : the fretted heavens were golden with fleecy clouds ; the sun stood in the zenith ; the breeze was laden with all sweetest and richest scents. It was an April day ; we were out wandering, with no other aim or object than to gather the wild and beautiful flowers, and to hear the songs of the birds, and perchance to look upwards on the blue ether, and think of this our nether paradise. We strolled

along, now stooping to pluck a primrose, and now leaning against some lofty elm ; “a scent of violets, and blossoming limes loitered around us.” We had not sauntered far, when we came upon a sundial ; it was a plain but massive pillar ; it stood within a lonely wood, “where meeting hazels darkened ;” the brook at its foot, with its clear, transparent waters, murmured ; we gazed thereon with “infant wonderment,” scarce deeming it a thing of earth. We were told it measured time—but how, we could not conceive : there were no hands to point the hours ; nothing but shadows rolled across its figures : it was something mysterious ; the stillness gave it additional influence ; it seemed as if creation’s heart had ceased to beat ; it might have been some dream-land that we were in, so tranquillizing were the sounds and sights of nature. And that stone—that stone ! it placed all things under a spell ; so simple, yet what influence it had ! As we passed onwards, the head and eye were often turned to look once more ; we left it unwillingly ; we could have stayed for ever. “The deep impression of that hour” subdues us now :—

So passes, silent o’er the dead, thy shade,
Brief Time !—and hour by hour, and day by day,
The pleasing pictures of the present fade,
And like a summer-vapour steal away.

And have not they who here forgotten lie—
Say, hoary chronicler of ages past—
Once marked thy shadow with delighted eye,
Nor thought it fled—how certain and how fast !

Since thou hast stood, and thus thy vigil kept,
Noting each hour, o’er mouldering stones beneath ;

The pastor and his flock alike have slept,
And “dust to dust” proclaimed the stride of death.

Another race succeeds, and counts the hour ;
Careless alike, the hour still seems to smile,
As hope, and youth, and life were in our power—
So smiling and so perishing the while.

I heard the village-bells, with gladsome sound—
When to these scenes a stranger I drew near—
Proclaim the tidings to the village round,
While memory slept upon the good man’s bier.

Even so, when I am dead, shall the same bells
Ring merrily, when my brief days are gone ;
While still the lapse of time thy shadows tell,
And strangers gaze upon my humble stone.

Enough, if we may wait in calm content
The hour that bears us to the silent sod ;
Blameless improve the time that Heaven has lent,
To leave the issue to thy will, O God.

All our author’s writings breathe much of this melancholy sweetness. If he does not raise the soul of his reader to scenes majestic and sublime, nor stir his thoughts by the energy and grandeur of his conceptions, still he never disappoints him ; there is ever something pleasing : he calms, soothes, and tranquillizes. We may already feel this gentle influence on our own mind ; it has been painful for us to write, so deep have been the gloom and melancholy he has brought over us ; he has infused his pensive sadness into our own heart ; earth now appears dim and vain ; the flowers droop their heads, and the winds moan languidly along ; they seem ready to decay ; the dark cypress suits us— it should wave over our tomb ; but we feel, too,

that love can never perish—it is inextinguishable; we take courage; we look upwards. In the ashes of the tomb there is a vivifying power; in the dust of the grave there are signs of everlasting life: that life shall last longer than the stars; they shall lose their brightness, and shall twinkle no longer in the firmament; but it shall grow in beauty and immortal vigour; we then shall regain our beloved ones; we shall be with them for ever. Reader, thy home is there!

SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

SPRING, light green spring is come ! One feels spring in all things : the air is spring ; the trees, spring ; the modest primrose, spring ; even the early walk to morning prayers is redolent of spring ; the reader's voice is spring ; the responses are all more sprightly and cheerful, speaking sweetly of spring : every tone is gentle and more lute-like. One feels that the world is budding : that the earth is clothing herself with transparent beauty. There is a quickness in the throbings of the heart. New blood seems infused through the veins. There is the silver dawn of life : the commencement of a fresh and purer existence. Joy spreads itself over all things ; and heaven and earth advance towards each other. How fresh, how beautiful is spring ! new hopes, new thoughts, new thirstings after the Holiest, new strivings to compass the Infinite, new entwinings of the spirit around the lovely and the good ! And then what remembrances of youth ! How the golden gleams of sunshine recall the thousand memories of the swollen heart ! Who has not felt this : felt a diviner and a higher being as spring brought its treasures to the land !

But why speak of spring ? why not talk of the subject in hand ? we do so. April weather is the

characteristic of our author. Now gleam of glorious sunshine, and now over-clouded skies; and yet the very light softened and fresh and beautiful, purer than when summer walks the earth. It is now spring, the birds trill their liquid notes in the morning, the buds look sweet in the golden beam. There is the violet and the crocus and the snow-drop; all fresh and exquisite: and we feel the same when reading the mellowed and soft-voiced autobiography of Sir Egerton.

That was a delicious summer's day in which we dreamed through this book. There was a peculiar sweetness in every line; and something strangely moving in his talk of forefathers, and their old and venerable halls: and then his boyhood, his clinging so fondly to home, his love of literature, all, all was inexpressibly touching. We dreamed onwards through the volumes. The casement was thrown open and the languid breeze floated in, filling the room with scents of fields. The trees waved gently their luxuriant foliage; and the sun poured forth his full golden light on the pages. We turned and turned, dreaming and dreaming. There was something so mellow in the old man's voice as he recalled his early days; and now that spring is come, our thoughts wander back to him with deeper feelings of regard.

We are not so much about to criticise as to give up ourselves to pleasant thoughts and memories. We shall talk of our feelings, shall let them flow as they will.

Then how the old man throws himself into the

past in writing his autobiography. It is not mere ledger-account, but sweet reminiscences of his former days. He becomes once more a child, tells us his pleasures, his dreams, the beauty of the family mansion, till we become in love with everything he did or thought. There is calm mellowed sunshine over his story. The lines flow on so softly : babble so sweetly. We forget ourselves in him. Then he tells us his bitter grief at leaving home and the fine old hall ; tells us and charms us with the simple tale of his sorrows. How one gently clings to the aged man : listens for every syllable. It is a dream, a quiet summer's dream, this life of his : but let us linger awhile over his page :—

My sensitiveness from childhood was the source of the most morbid sufferings, as well as of the most intense pleasures. It unfitted me for concourse with other boys, and took away all self-possession in society. It also produced ebbs and flows in my spirits, and made me capricious and humoursome ; and the opinions formed were most opposite ; some thinking well of my faculties, others deeming me little above an idiot. I was so timid on entering into school, and my spirits were so broken by separation from home, and the rudeness of my companions, that in my first school-boy years, I never enjoyed a moment of ease or cheerfulness.

Many have suffered thus intensely on leaving home for the cold atmosphere of school ; many have gone broken-hearted. Nothing can compensate for the quiet, the tenderness, and the blessedness of home. We could never send a child away from us. But passing onwards our author writes :

At that time a new book was like wine to me, and produced a temporary delirium of oblivion. Then my enthusiasms were

all awakened, in defiance of earthly oppressions. I had a noble room for my library and beautiful scenery around me. Before me rose a hill skirted with wood; and behind, another hill more precipitous, at the foot of which the mansion stood, and over the brow of which was placed the dear old seat in which I was born; to the east ran those meadows of emerald green, of which Gray the poet speaks in his letters.

And again a few pages further on :—

The volumes always lay in one of the windows of the common parlour at Wootten: and how often have I rejoiced, when the rain and snow came, to keep me by the winter fire-side, instead of mounting my pony, to follow all the morning my uncle's harriers! And when I was out, I counted the hours till I could return to my beloved books!

Thus the heart recalleth years gone by, and summons up the loves, and fears, and hopes, and dreams of childhood. Once more we would listen to the old man :—

I love the month of August: it is the commencement of the fading year. I have always found a pleasing melancholy in the fall of the leaves, from my early childhood, when I scattered them into heaps, and made bowers and huts of them. Thomson has described this melancholy admirably. But why should we like the year's decline? Does not old age come upon us too fast? And why should we like storms and cold better than sunshine and genial warmth? A contemplative mind loves the fire-side; and the darkness of winter is a veil which nurses thought.

There is a mixture of melancholy with spring-tide in all these, touching peculiarly the soul and awakening memories of our own days when we strolled onwards from King's, stopping oftentimes to gaze upon some picture of beauty; then moving on amid the tread of busy humanity dreaming all

golden things, and looking upwards on the blue heavens mantling the streets. And so we used to stroll till we emerged into the Green Park, and crossing Hyde Park passed into Kensington Gardens ; and then what sweet interchange of thought and feeling we had beneath those fine noble trees, how Time sailed by with fleetest pinion as we walked in the sunny afternoons, not thinking of our morning tasks, but dreaming full well of beauty and perfect purity. Even King's did not keep us shackled. How delighted we were when two or three of us got together at the end form, so that we might wile away the hours, and ever and anon a bright gleam of the sun would dart into the otherwise dim room, and make us throb to talk of love and tenderness and faith amid fields and brooks. And we took poets, and whilst the rest were conning their tasks did we dream over these and commune. How bright our eyes ; how young and buoyant our hearts ! And what pacings we had along the corridor over the grand stair-case deeply engaged in boisterous argument. They were sunny and blessed days ! And oft we would leave the walls of King's and saunter round Somerset House or along the Terrace immersed in happy visions—for hours have we walked, and they were silver hours. We think of them now ; think of those congenial spirits who then accompanied us ; think where they are and whether they have realized what they so fondly anticipated. We are widely scattered, but some one of them may come across our path, and then how different to what we were !

The heart frequently wanders after each and all,
and prays for blessedness upon their homes !

There is something sweet in the sound of Kensington Gardens ; and yet something melancholy — years have flown since we dreamed away the summer-afternoons therein. We well remember what bursts of happiness we felt when painting the future ; and how we revelled in love of this our universe ; yea, in love of everything pure and holy. We often too promised kind services by and bye ; services in the chaste and most exquisite dream of life. Just by the old red palace did we thus make our assignations and often parted ; one to a princely house, and the other to a quiet blessed cot surrounded by ivied trees and covered with roses and honey-suckles.

Then too did we meet in the study of that cottage-abode, and what calm summer-evenings were spent ! There were dreams of beauty, the liquid warble of poets, the song of birds, the deep rich-toned organ, the beautiful flowers, and the exquisitely soft time. This was our teaching ; the study of the schools was thrown aside : King's came poorly off with most of us. But no matter, we enjoyed exquisite moments ; and these will be the sun-spots to which the eye of all will often turn in after-years and be refreshed.

We remember when we bought our first pictures. We had left King's some three years, and were looking forward to our degree. We passed down Trumpington-street ; and at an old-fashioned house we saw the very spirit of beauty breathing

itself in two exquisitely coloured prints ; their names Innocence and Modesty. How we loved to gaze in that window ; it seemed the opening of Paradise ; some place out of this dull world ; some spot serene-circled, dove-like, and blessed. It was not as other windows ; they held no such sweet-nesses. There were golden gleams ever hovering over this antique house.

But we purchased the pictures ; and we revelled when they came home. We felt they were hallowed things ; purity-breathing forms. We seemed to become better in their presence. We fancied that every sweet odour should be near ; and ere we retired to rest, we gazed oft and long, wishing intensely for the morn that we might gaze again. So passed some of our college-days, dreaming of all things beautiful ; and startling many by our worship of the true and perfect. They were silver-sprinkled, violet-scented dreams.

CARLYLE.

WE note the great distinguishing feature of Carlyle; the one pervading element of his character. Remark it once, and you remark it for ever. He seizes hold of the Present; he identifies himself with the Present; he sees only the Present; he feels nothing but the Present. All the grandeur of his genius is brought to bear on the Present. If he writes history he writes it as it is. It is no dull cold account of the past; it is the living, speaking Present. What the people think, what they hope, what they imagine, what they fear; this he stamps on the page. What the individual is, and not what he is not. We see a human being. We see one of ourselves. He too has been born of woman and has been rocked in the cradle. He too has loved, dreamed, and suffered. No idle tale; no mere image. It is vivid, it is life.

This perception of the Present influences everything he writes. You behold it in all his works. It produces his finest and most magnificent passages. He does not create so much as he simply tells us what men did. Robertson and Hume do not write history; their's is no real, true, certain history. Mosheim and Milner are but dry unin-

telligible books. We know nothing from them ; we thank them only for their extracts from living men, for nothing else. Carlyle is the only true historical writer we have. History is not a mere account book ; a mere ledger ; a mere network of facts ; a mere saying that this was done and that was left undone. This is not history. We know no more after we have finished the details, than we did before we sat down to read : not so much.

History should be history ; and nothing else. We want to know what people thought, and felt, and hoped for, as well as what they did. We want to know whether it was a fine summer afternoon when such and such things were done ; and whether the national heart rejoiced in the sunshine. The mere outside we want not, we want the soul. Hence the daily journals are better history than Gibbon and Niebuhr, and the rest. They tell us what is doing ; what men are about ; what they expect ; what they dread. Hence, too, letters are better history still. Horace Walpole and Lady Wortley Montagu let us into more real knowledge of their times than a thousand Humes or Smolletts.

What is so full of life as Boswell's Johnson ; there is a charm about it which takes us completely captive. We cease to be men of the nineteenth century. We are not of Now ; we are of the Past. That Past has become Now—our Present. We hear Johnson, we are his companions, we go with him to Oxford, we suffer with him. We converse with him at Lichfield ; we struggle with him onwards from old St. John's gate, till he becomes the

great-one of the British Empire. We know Sir Joshua and Goldsmith as well as our closest friends. We are as much acquainted with Langton as though he had been our associate from youth. Every one who has read this book has forgotten the Present. He has no existence in our Now. He is living in the Past ; living in the living Past.

This fixing, this concentrating all the powers upon the subject, bringing it before one as the present, is Carlyle's distinctive characteristic. He has no faculty to harmonize his works into a whole. Indeed this would destroy his effect. It is for the philosopher to view things as completed ; to view them by certain great principles ; it belongs not to a writer of history, which we affirm Carlyle only and entirely to be. His essays, his criticisms, are nothing but sketches of history. He seizes entirely on this : some little striking incident, and with what pathos and feeling does he dwell upon it !

We have said that he is deficient in producing anything as a complete whole. Perhaps this is seen most in his French Revolution. It is not a whole ; there is no harmony of parts. One cannot view it as done ; it is a mere chaos ; for order we must look elsewhere.

But were it otherwise, no Carlyle should we have ; we should have some follower of Hume and the rest ; a mere accountant. A true writer of history cannot harmonize. He must be disjointed. The parts cannot be consistent with our notion of proportion ; that is impossible. We must have what did take place ; and not what we deem

proper symmetry. Carlyle writes as the people felt, or as the individual felt ; and what oneness is there in this ? What oneness is there in our lives ? Are we not sometimes dull, and sometimes bright ; sometimes loving, and sometimes hating ; sometimes hoping, and sometimes fearing ? How can we paint all this with one colour, and think of it under one influence ? would there be any truth in the painting or in the thought ? There cannot be harmony ; there cannot be proportion ; there cannot be the same tint ; there cannot be the like sound of pleasure or of woe. Amid so much contrariety it were impossible to educe order ; were it educated, it would be false. We know this well in ourselves ; and we should do better were we to know it of what has passed.

Hence we see that the two powers of individualism and classification cannot exist together in any great degree. The true writer of history must not, cannot generalize ; the moment he does, that moment he fails ; and hence we feel in laying down Carlyle's books that he has succeeded in telling us all that men felt and did, because he has seldom, if ever, attempted to look upon the events under a certain light.

But we must proceed more fully to examine this guiding, this entire characteristic of our author. It is this which makes him different from other men ; it is this which makes him all he is or ever will be. You find it breathing in his earliest works. Proceed onwards and it becomes the breath of a giant ; no longer only just perceptible, but the whole man.

In his Essay on Johnson reprinted in his Miscellanies, and published first in May 1832, we find this remarkable perception of what was doing and what was done, both in his own strictures and in his quotations. Observe how the following is imbued with this power :—

Then there is the chivalrous Topham Beauclerk, with his sharp wit, and gallant country ways; there is Bennet Langton, an orthodox gentleman, and worthy; though Johnson once laughed, louder almost than mortal, at his last will and testament; and “could not stop his merriment, but continued it all the way till he got without the Temple-gate, then burst into such a fit of laughter, that he appeared to be almost in a convulsion; and, in order to support himself, laid hold of one of the posts at the side of the foot-pavement, and sent forth peals so loud that, in the silence of the night, his voice seemed to resound from Temple-bar to Fleet-ditch!”

By this we are ourselves taken from century nineteenth to century eighteenth, and from this ancient library of Cambridge, where we are now sitting, surrounded by books issued for the last four hundred years and more, and only hearing at intervals the hum of busy man; we say we are taken from all this to Temple-bar and become real living persons of the evening, when the great Lexicographer rolled himself along Fleet-street. Now this is the tremendous faculty of our author. He throws aside time whenever he willeth. By him we can live, truly live, live as we now live, and perhaps better, on the night when Johnson thus boisterously laughed at the curious will of Bennet Langton.

So, reader, you have been in Fleet-street and under Temple-bar. It is a dull smoky place,

crowded with human beings indeed, but no gaiety ; no matter, wherever you are, wherever living, you are here in London. The north cannot hold you ; you must travel hitherwards when Carlyle speaks. No pleasant home, no tender tie of wife or child can keep you : here you must and do come : come to this very spot, and behold its dark buildings, and its care-worn men passing and repassing. Mark you, the present century is not yet : that is in the womb of To Come. You recollect nothing of yourself, your kindred, your abode, your profession, nothing whatever. Here you are, as much a dweller of this earth in that year, as was Johnson. This is exactly Carlyle's spirit over you ; you cannot help it. Read and you are captive to there and then. No matter striving : strivings avail nothing ; so attempt not.

Again in that only true history of the French Revolution, we see this power more greatly exercised. Once begin to read, and read you must. It takes hold of you with giant force. It is all strange ; the chapters strange, the titles strange ; but a sensible history it is for all that ; nothing less and nothing more. You become a Frenchman, you sigh over the famine desolating the fairest provinces, the people have to eat boiled grass ; something must come of this. So you think ; so others think : and there will be something come of it. The minds of men are being shaken to and fro ; and so is yours. No longer are you an Englishman or a Scot : either one or the other you lose when you gaze on the first page of his book.

You cease to have your personal identity : that is gone entirely. But you have what you want : the feelings and thoughts of 1791 : these are the things you want, nothing else, nothing less. Read a history as one living now and you do not read correctly : neither can you judge correctly what did take place and what men fondly anticipated. Hence you are no more a liver now ; but are rather a liver then and there. So the history rolls on ; sometimes with tumult, and sometimes with sunbeam. Both, you cannot always have, so must take as they are given. There will be brilliant dreams of freedom, and you too will dream. There will be struggles, and you too will struggle. There will be golden hope and a day all sweet and peaceful, and you too will have hope and enjoy this day. There will come executions, many and marvellous, and you will be there. The king and the queen and mighty souls will be cast down, and you will behold it all. Blood and deism, blood and atheism, blood and harlotry, all will engage you ; nay, you will be engaged in them. Calm quiet evenings indeed will be yours ; but also dismal, awful and tremendous ones.

Thus when you open this Carlyle you cease to be yourself ; you go back into the opening of time ; into what is long gone by. You become then and there existing. And here is the great marvel of the book, here is the true history. We need no results, philosophically considered ; these we leave to the moralist and politician. Results are not known for years after the event has occurred :

could the people see the result of this Revolution? they fancied what would be, and so must you; not know what is.

We said this history abounded in these mighty influences of taking you from the Now and transferring you to the Then. Open the book at any page and chance is, that you find much to bear us out in our judgment; but open at page 125 in the third volume of the second edition, and you will see it all exemplified; Louis is being condemned:—

And so, finally, at eight in the evening this third stupendous voting, by roll-call or *appel nominal*, does begin. What punishment? Girondins undecided, patriots decided, men afraid of royalty, men afraid of anarchy, must answer here and now. Infinite patriotism, dusky in the lamp-light, floods all corridors, crowds all galleries; sternly waiting to hear. Shrill-sounding ushers summon you by name and department; you must rise to the tribune and say.

Eye-witnesses have represented this scene of the third voting, and of the votings that grew out of it; a scene protracted, like to be endless, lasting, with few brief intervals, from Wednesday till Sunday morning, as one of the strangest seen in the Revolution. Long night wears itself into day, morning's paleness is spread over all faces; and again the wintry shadows sink, and the dim lamps are lit; but through day and night and the vicissitude of hours, member after member is mounting continually those tribune-steps; pausing aloft there, in the clearer upper-light, to speak his fate-word; then diving down into the dusk and throng again. Like phantoms in the hour of midnight; most spectral, pandemomial! Never did President Vergniaud, or any other terrestrial President, superintend the like. A king's life, and so much else that depends thereon, hangs trembling in the balance. Man after man mounts; the buzz hushes itself till he has spoken; death; banishment; imprisonment till peace. Many say death; with what cautious well-studied phrases and paragraphs they could devise of explanation, of enforcement, of

faint recommendation to mercy. Many, too, say banishment; something short of death. The balance trembles, none yet guess whitherward. Whereat anxious patriotism bellows; irrepressible by ushers.

Turn to page 313 of the same Volume:—

The great heart of Danton is weary of it. Danton is gone to native Arcis, for a little breathing time of peace; away, black Arachne-webs, thou world of fury, terror, and suspicion; welcome, thou everlasting Mother, with thy spring greenness, thy kind household loves and memories; true art thou, were all else untrue. The great Titan walks silent, by the banks of the murmuring Aube, in young native haunts that knew him when a boy; wonders what the end of these things may be.

Page 320:—

Some five months ago the trial of the twenty-two Girondins was the greatest that Fouquier had then done. But here is a still greater to do; a thing which tasks the whole faculty of Fouquier; which makes the very heart of him to waver. For it is the voice of Danton that reverberates now from these domes; in passionate words, piercing with their wild sincerity, winged with wrath. Your best witnesses he shivers into ruin at one stroke. He demands that the committee-men themselves come as witnesses, as accusers; he “will cover them with ignominy.” He raises his huge stature, he shakes his huge black head, fire flashes from the eyes of him,—piercing to all Republican hearts: so that the very galleries, though we filled them by ticket, murmur sympathy; and are like to burst down, and raise the people, and deliver him! He complains loudly that he is classed with Chabots, with swindling stock-jobbers; that his indictment is a list of platitudes and horrors. “Danton hidden on the tenth of August?” reverberates he, with the roar of a lion in the toils; “Where are the men that had to press Danton to shew himself that day? where are these high-gifted souls of whom he borrowed energy? Let them appear, these accusers of mine; I have all the clearness of my self-possession when I demand them. I will unmask the three shallow scoundrels,” les trois plats coquins, Saint-Just, Couthon, Lebas, “who fawn on Robespierre, and lead him towards his destruction. Let them produce

themselves here; I will plunge them into nothingness out of which they ought never to have risen." The agitated President agitates his bell; enjoins calmness, in a vehement manner: "What is it to thee how I defend myself?" cries the other: "the right of dooming me is thine always. The voice of a man speaking for his honour and his life, may well drown the jingling of thy bell!" Thus Danton, higher and higher, till the lion voice of him dies away in his throat: speech will not utter what is in that man. The galleries murmur ominously; the first day's session is over.

Page 322 :—

At the foot of the scaffold, Danton was heard to ejaculate, "O my wife, my well-beloved, I shall never see thee more then!"—but interrupting himself; "Danton, no weakness!"

So passes, like a gigantic mass, of valour, ostentation, fury, affection, and wild revolutionary manhood, this Danton to his unknown home. He was of Arcis-sur-Aube; born of "good farmer-people" there. He had many sins; but one worst sin he had not, that of cant. No hollow formalist, deceptive and self-deceptive, ghastly to the natural sense, was this, but a very man; with all his dross he was a man; fiery-real from the great fire-bosom of nature herself.

Thirdly and lastly, for we must quote from three of his works, look into the book entitled Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches with Elucidations, just at the beginning, in the first volume and at page 60, and you will find this taking you out of self and making or transforming you into another is here also: you have one more gaze into time past. You learn what was done on a certain day, on the 23rd day of April, 1616; what was doing at this our Cambridge, and what was doing in sweet sunny Stratford-upon-Avon :—

Curious enough, of all days on this same day, Shakspeare, as his stone monument still testifies, at Stratford-on-Avon, died: 'Obiit anno Domini 1616, Ætatis 53, Die 23 Apr.' While

Oliver Cromwell was entering himself of Sidney-Sussex College, William Shakspeare was taking his farewell of this world. Oliver's father had, most likely, come with him ; it is but twelve miles from Huntingdon ; you can go and come in a day. Oliver's father saw Oliver write in the Album at Cambridge : at Stratford, Shakspeare's Ann Hathaway was weeping over his bed. The first world-great thing that remains of English history, the literature of Shakspeare, was ending ; the second great-world thing that remains of English history, the armed appeal of Puritanism to the invisible God of heaven, against very many visible devils, on earth and elsewhere, was, so to speak, beginning. They have their exits and their entrances. And one people in its time plays many parts.

We pass by every other characteristic of our author ; they have in general been mainly dwelt upon in critiques upon his works, so this may as well stand as it is. One notion we have given of Carlyle ; and we believe it to be a true one. False it cannot be, for we have felt it ; not only seen, but felt ; that is ever better than seeing, something deeper.

So here we conclude our paper, having just expressed our thoughts on a single point ; a point worthy indeed to be studied by our historians, and those who praise our notable ones : here, in this old library, having left a little while since the Fellows' Buildings of Christ College, in a quiet room of which we had been lectured in gloom-work, bearing name mathematics, by one who gained the love and esteem of every member of his class, and who could forgive our dull stupidity at this mill-labour and treat us with gentle kindness ; in deep earnest sincerity he has our heart-thanks : here then we conclude this paper, and beg you Reader

to accept our thoughts as the thoughts of one who has read Carlyle till the sounds of carnage, the scenes of slaughter, the blasphemous cries of atheism, and the polluted voice of harlotry have been heard and seen by us ; not in our own person, but in the person of a Revolutionist of 1791 ; till we have walked down Fleet-street and passed through Temple-bar with two remarkable personages, the one Johnson and the other Boswell ; till we have forgotten Now, and been somehow or another transferred to this pleasant town on the day in which Cromwell entered, a youth dreaming naught of kingship or protectorship, and till we have been present in the dying chamber of England's greatest poet ; and thus would we, in this place, and at this time, when looking forward to our becoming an unobtrusive pastor, in some unknown, unheard of hamlet, express what we have felt and thought when reading Carlyle : thus much also, that you, Reader, will not fail to be likewise moved, should you take up his volumes ; and so likewise will you think. Remember then, that a young, dreaming, hoping, reverencing boy, sitting in this antique room and beneath this quiet cupola, on this day of Feb. 28th, and in this year 1848, has felt and thought what you do : so farewell.

CARRINGTON.

THE subject of our present paper was born at Plymouth, in 1777, of respectable parentage. Nothing remarkable occurred in his life until he reached his sixteenth year, when he was apprenticed to Mr. Thomas Foot, a measurer: the pursuits of his profession, however, were unsuitable to his literary predilections. The love of poetry, as embodied in the beautiful creations of God, had taken possession of his soul, and when once under the dominion of that delightful passion, we feel a growing dislike to noise and bustle; it leads its votaries to the contemplation of nature in all her loveliness and grandeur; it leads them to meditate amid her solitary haunts and quiet seclusions; every flower is rich with a thousand memories, every shrub with a thousand associations. Literature stamps an everlasting charm and an everlasting truth on those scenes which rise in simple majesty around us.

In the dockyard there could be little that was congenial; its noise was little suited to the spirit that had learned to love the creations of poet and of painter. He might, indeed, have dreamt of beautiful things while at his labours; he might have depicted the blushing scenery of nature, colouring it with the golden and purple tints of his fancy;

he might have listened to the sweet music of heaven and earth; but ever and anon the truth would come that he was far from these, and they far from him.

Each day, as it glided by, bore with its fading glories the entreaties of our poet for a change of situation: it was in vain he asked; the boon was refused. After some three years of hope and fear he ran away. He had no sooner done this, than he felt the effects of his own rashness, for not having courage to return home, he seemed an outcast and an exile. In this emergency he entered on "shipboard," and soon after was present at the victory off Cape St. Vincent, on the 14th of February, 1797. Having written some verses on the occasion, the first he ever penned, they met the eye of his captain, who appreciated their merits, and became deeply interested in their author. Having learned his story, he promised to send him to his parents immediately on their arrival in England. The youthful bard soon obtained forgiveness, and was once more reinstated in the home of infancy. He was now allowed to choose his own profession, and ere very long, became a public schoolmaster.

Seven years after this, we find him removed to Maidstone, in Kent. In 1805, he married, and continued to pursue his avocation with success until 1809, when he returned to Plymouth, at the earnest request of some friends, who were anxious to place their sons under his care: he remained here till within six months of his death: his duties allowed him little or no recreation. In 1820, he

produced his *Banks of Tamar*, which was well received ; and four years afterwards he published *Dartmoor*, with still greater success. Friends now gathered round him, and even royalty itself smiled. He continued from this time to write occasional pieces for magazines until disabled by sickness. In 1830, he relinquished his school and removed to Bath, where he died a few months afterwards. His burial-place seems suited to his character : it lies in the secluded village of Combehay, somewhat more than three miles from his latest residence, “deep sunk” in a romantic and sequestered vale.

Our author’s finest poem is, unquestionably, *Dartmoor*. It is marked by much truth and beauty, and its strain is lively and joyous ; there are a few melancholy notes, a few pensive touches ; its versification is in general harmonious, and its descriptions strong and characteristic ; its imagery is correct, and its associations pleasant ; its episodes are full of sweetness ; it scents of the gorse and broom which grow on our heaths, and sounds with the murmuring of brooks and the dashing of the rushing torrent.

The commencement of the poem presents us with the following beautiful apostrophe :—

Lovely Devonia ! land of flowers and songs !
To thee the duteous lay. Thou hast a cloud
For ever in thy sky—a breeze, a shower,
For ever on thy meads ;—yet where shall man
Pursuing Spring around the globe, refresh
His eye with scenes more beauteous than adorn
Thy fields of matchless verdure ! Not the south—

The glowing south—with all its azure skies,
And aromatic groves, and fruits that melt
At the rapt touch, and deep-hued flowers that light
Their tints at zenith suns—has charms like thine,
Though fresh the gale that ruffles thy wild seas,
And wafts the frequent cloud. I own the power
Of local sympathy, that o'er the fair
Throws more divine allurement, and o'er all
The great more grandeur; and my kindling muse,
Fired by the universal passion, pours,
Haply, a partial lay. Forgive the strain,
Enamoured, for to man in every clime,
The sweetest, dearest, noblest spot below,
Is that which gives him birth; and long it wears
A charm unbroken, and its honoured name,
Hallowed by memory, is fondly breathed
With his last lingering sigh.

And who is there amongst us who feels not the power of local sympathy? How beautiful and bright those hills up which we toiled in childhood; how thick they stand with sweet associations! how lovely those woodbine lanes along which our feet used to stray, and what remembrances entwine their green hedge-rows and shady trees! The very wild-flowers that trembled in the evening breeze seemed more exquisite than others. How quiet and calm the village we were accustomed to visit, with its straw-roofed cottages, low porches, and latticed panes, with its ancient church and ivied parsonage! There seems to be a deeper shade in those yews that skirted the church-yard, and a more softened repose breathed over the lonely graves. And thus we ever cling to those streams, and walks, and flowers, and trees, and peaceful

huts, and Elizabethan mansions we gazed on in bygone years : memory adorns them with a more than rainbow beauty.

The sky of Italy may be bright and sunny, but the sky which mantled over the place of our birth, and which witnessed our youthful sports, seems to us more sunny and more bright. Other lands may be graced with the narcissus and the orange-blossom, and may be breathed on by gentle winds and balmy gales, and there may be silvery whisperings in their woods ; but that nook which beheld us laughing in the joyance of childhood seems to be graced with sweeter flowers and breathed on by more softened gales ; and from out its woods comes a more silvery music. Other countries may be decked with high-crested mountains and deep dark lakes reflecting in their still waters the magnificent sunset and sunrise and the resplendent glory of the starry hosts ; but there is a retreat which yields to us thoughts more stirring and feelings more throbbing than any of these.

We return to Dartmoor :—

In sunlight and in shade—
Repose and storm,—wide waste ! I since have trod
Thy hill and dale magnificent. Again
I seek thy solitudes profound, in this
Thy hour of deep tranquillity, when rests
The sunbeam on thee, and thy desert seems
To sleep in the unwonted brightness—calm
But stern : for, though the spirit of the spring
Breathes on thee, to the charmer's whisper kind
Thou listenest not, nor ever puttest on
A robe of beauty, as the fields that bud
And blossom near thee. Yet I love to tread

Thy central wastes when not a sound intrudes
Upon the ear, but rush of wing, or leap
Of the hoarse waterfall. And, oh, 'tis sweet,
To list the music of thy torrent streams ;
For thou too hast thy minstrelsies for him
Who from their liberal mountain-urn delights
To trace thy waters, as from source to sea
They rush tumultuous.

There are times when the soft and voluptuous please not, when we seek the solitary region ; the stern features of nature are then more suited to the soul ; we love its severer beauties ; the voice of waters amid the solemnity of seeming desolation is proper music, none other is desirable. The singing of the birds harmonizes not, the cooing of the dove is unwelcome ; the whispering of trees, hum of bees, and tinklings of the sheep-bell belong not to creation in its wilder domains. The silvery chime of the chapel-bell would be ungrateful ; nothing but the torrent's hoarse and dashing sounds are in accordance. In such a spot, all solitary and alone, sublime thoughts will often pass over the spirit, and shake it as with a storm ; a mightier power is disclosed, a more tremendous energy ; the busy world is shut out, the transient affairs of mortals shrink into littleness ; the immortal stands divested of its earthliness ; we feel, as it were, a new being. With the vast sky above, and the wide waste below, the mind puts on its highest and loftiest attributes.

The following is very picturesque :—

Fair is thy level landscape, England, fair
As ever nature formed ! Away it sweeps,

A wide, a smiling prospect, gay with flowers
And waving grass, and trees of amplest growth,
And sparkling rills, and rivers winding slow
Through all the smooth immense. Upon the eye
Arise the village and the village-spire,
The clustering hamlet, and the peaceful cot
Clasped by the woodbine, and the lordly dome,
Proud peering 'mid the stately oak and elm
Leaf-loving. Sweet the frequent lapse of brook,
The poetry of groves, the voice of bells
From aged towers, and labour's manly song
From cultured fields upswelling. Sweet the hues
Of all the fertile land ; and when the sun
And shower alternate empire hold, how fresh,
How gay, how all-enchanting to the view,
Beheld at first, the broad champaign appears !

Nor is this less beautiful :—

Bird, bee, and butterfly—the favourite three
That meet us ever on our summer path !
And what, with all her forms and hues divine,
Would summer be without them ? Though the skies
Were blue, and blue the streams, and fresh the fields,
And beautiful, as now, the waving woods,
And exquisite the flowers ; and though the sun
Beamed from his cloudless throne from day to day,
And, with the breeze and shower, more loveliness
Shed o'er this lovely world ; yet all would want
A charm, if those sweet denizens of earth
And air made not the great creation teem
With beauty, grace, and motion ! Who would bless
The landscape, if upon his morning walk
He greeted not the feathery nations, perched,
For love or song, amid the dancing leaves ;
Or wantoning in flight from bough to bough,
From field to field : ah, who would bless thee, June,
If silent, songless were the groves,—unheard
The lark in heaven ?—And he who meets the bee
Rifling the bloom, and listless hears his hum,
Incessant ringing through the glowing day ;

Or loves not the gay butterfly that swims
Before him in the ardent noon, arrayed
In crimson, azure, emerald, and gold ;
With more magnificence upon his wing—
His little wing—than ever graced the robe
Gorgeous of royalty—is like the kine
That wander 'mid the flowers which gem the meads,
Unconscious of their beauty.

How exquisite is this :

Long

He wooed a maid all innocence and truth,
And lovely as the loveliest nymph that treads
Thy banks, swift rushing Rhone ; and she returned
His passionate suit, and every day that came
Strengthened the indissoluble charm that wound
Itself round their young hearts. Thy skies are blue,
Fair Provence, and thy streams are clear, and fringed
By the lush vine, that in thy quiet vales
Hangs out its full frank clusters, glowing deep
With richest amethystine tint ; and thou
Hast songs of witching minstrelsy from bowers
Of fragrance ; and amid the deepening shade
Of groves, sweet cots—abodes of health and peace—
By woodbine, rose, and myrtle sweetly decked.
But love has power to fling an added charm
Even on the beautiful ; and when these met,
At magic eve, the soft, the sunny south
Yet more enchanting seemed ;—the hills, the vales
Wore an unearthly charm ;—the crystal streams
Rolled on with new-born minstrelsies ;—the woods
Were greener, fairer ; and this world arose
To their quick-beaming and delighted eyes,
With all the hues and forms of Paradise.

If mind thus makes more beautiful the beautiful
of earth when it is swayed by the tender passion of
love, why, when that mind becomes perfected in
the very elements of affection and holiness, should
this fair creation be withdrawn ? We believe the

general opinion to be erroneous on this subject. It may, indeed, be the received idea ; but it does not necessarily follow, because it is so received, that therefore it is true : history will point out the fallacy of deeming a thing veritable because it is universal. Our knowledge concerning the unseen world may be limited, but not so limited as many would have us to think ; they build their argument on the declaration that "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." On this, too, we build our objection. And first, may not this passage refer to man by nature—man without a revelation ? Then it is true. Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, the heart hath not conceived ; but Jehovah hath revealed ; He hath opened up ; He hath unfolded ; He hath unravelled the mystery ; He hath withdrawn the veil ; He hath poured living sunshine into the dim and dark unknown. If He has not, what mean those glimpses of heaven seen in the Book ? What mean those scenes of the eternal realm ever and anon brought before the eye in the Oracle ? Nay, what mean those full and glowing descriptions of the better land, so often brightening on the gaze in the authentic Word ? What means that magnificent city, that limpid stream, that tree of life ? What mean those deep divine hymnings, those glorious anthems rolling their harmonies upwards to the throne of almighty love and power ? And because we have not conceived those transcendent beauties, those matchless splendours, those

exquisite strains, and those tremendous outbreaks of song, does it therefore follow that God may not have revealed the unutterable vision ?

The national religion of the ancient and modern world corroborates the Apostle's assertion. Time would fail us to examine each and every illustration : one or two must suffice. The Grecian mythology was man's conception—man's thought : it was his idea of the unseen world : fair, lovely, and graceful in many of its creations, it was deficient in purity, it was polluted with every crime, debased with every vice. It was without the first element of love ; that hallowed principle, in its divinest and most unsullied essence, was not there : it was without holiness. And here we may behold the verity of the scriptural fact, that man hath not conceived the glories that lie beyond that dark barrier which shuts us from the spiritual and eternal.

Passing over the sterner Roman, the fantastic Hindoo, and the vigorous Norse mythologies, let us take our second illustration from the imagined heaven of the South Sea islander ; and we shall find that, with its many truths, it has not this—the immaculate purity of its inhabitants. And wherever we turn our attention, we shall see that each is wanting in this respect. Now Jehovah reveals it as based on holiness, as shrined in love ; a distinct and separate idea from theirs : the great heart of humanity dreamt not, even in its most hallowed moments, of this : it dreamt not of purity ; it dreamt not of love : neither did it dream of the spiritual exceeding the corporeal, nor that obedience

to the Supreme was the highest freedom. Its paradise was decked with the helenium, the hellebore, and the henbane ; the sleepy poppy and the poisonous hemlock grew on the banks of its dark turbid stream ; it was characterized by uncleanness ; licentiousness and sensuality were there. Justice there was none ; love there was none. Its heaven was the true idea of hell ; its true picture, its true essence. It was, indeed, drawn with a master's energy and a master's power, but it bore the dim, black colourings of that "other place." And hence do we find it demonstrably certain that eye hath not seen those holy and unclouded scenes which unfold their beauty and their sweetness in the celestial world.

But to our belief, God himself has revealed the loveliness and unsullied grace of that fair region. Hath he not said that it is smiled on by holiness ? —hath he not declared that it is breathed over and prevaded by the divinest affection ? that its beautiful intelligences love ?—hath he not said that weeping and sorrow shall be for ever banished, and for ever exiled there ?—If we are wrong in our faith, what mean these descriptions ?—what mean these fine bold sketches ?—what mean these magnificent paintings ?—what mean these withdrawals of the mystic curtain ?—what mean these cheering promises ? Oh, mean they nothing ? With voice as of ocean's roar, and the sublime roll of thunders, yet sweet as the soft cadence of an evening bell, are they, too, without import ?

It was necessary that a revelation should tell man

whither he was bound ; it was necessary that a revelation should declare the characteristics of that world beyond, to which he was verging every moment, and hastening every hour ; it was necessary that a revelation should be implicit on this matter, seeing that therein were knitted together the hopes and fears, the consolations and terrors, of the human breast. And according as it was required, so was it done. Look we in the pages of that Book ; what read we ? “ Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit : for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.” The darkness which rested on the asserted fact is dispelled by the latter clause ; gloom is hence ; the twilight has become open day ; doubt, certainty.

Heaven is love ; love is heaven. He who is made perfect in love, is already in the enjoyment of its bliss. Love—heaven ; heaven—love. Thus we reason ; perhaps rightly : hence every feeling of the heart should beat with love ; every thought be imbued with love. Oh, to reach this, to become thus assimilated to the Everlasting ! Of all the Bible, we admire the epistles of the beloved disciple the most ; how thrilling and divine their melting and subduing tenderness ! we cannot read their deep gushing words without once and for ever feeling that heaven is love ; love, heaven.

And, indeed, we find that love, when pure and holy, makes even our fallen earth a heaven. The

love of any worthy object is bright as the golden beams of a sunny sky lighting up with a greener beauty the dark palms in some ocean's isle. Love nature, and what happiness is ours ! Cling to its forms and its majestic shapes, and what unutterable joy ! Sit on a solitary sea-rock, watching the dashing of the surging billows, and what inexpressible delight ! Gaze on the growing dimness of eventide, and what delicious luxury ! The being is thrilled, as it were an aspen leaf ; it is tremulous to every gentle breeze, and every passing sound. And the flowers, too—the peeping upwards of the crimson rose at the dawn of summer, how like the beauty of a blushing countenance, and the sweetness of an angel's lips ; the slightest touch, and the soul is moved with ecstatic throbbing ! Love ever thus yields an unsullied felicity. We speak not of unchaste, unhallowed, sensual love : ah, no ! sad that such a creeping slimy thing should ever have had its birth-hour : but so it is. We weep to know it ; would that it were dead, and swept far off into annihilation ! Love parents—love kinsmen—love friends—love wife—love child with the spirit's fondest, purest, deepest, affection, and what inexpressible bliss ! Nature then becomes more beautiful, and all her scenes tinted with a richer colouring.

Stand on ocean's shore, and, while the western sun casts forth his gloomy grandeur on the hills of Arran, and the breeze sweeps onwards from the far distance, and the hoarse music of the wave dashes ever and anon on the ear, look on those clouds

that roll and billow around the sinking day-god, and with their every change, and their every hue, will come remembrances of those we love, and those who, night after night, and morning after morning, have kneeled in secret prayer to the Everlasting for us ! And with those hallowed and tender memories comes a soft ethereal melody—sad and yet gay—a strange harmony of pensive yet lively tones. And then will the thoughts pierce upwards, and dreams of the better land come over us, visions of its dark-veiled glories, sounds of its mysterious minstrelsy, echoes of its deep-strung praise, reverberations of its rolling anthems, gleams of its magnificent sky, tints of its graceful beauty, colourings of its enchanting loveliness, beams of its vast, and infinite, and imperishable blessedness ! And have we not, too, when far away from the waters of the sea, gone often into our chamber in the shadows of eventide, and, closing the door, have we not knelt with those we love, and prayed to the King of that sunny clime ? And the rays of that bright realm, and the mellifluous hymns of that sweet land, and the odoriferous perfumes of its myriad flowers, and its eternal quietude of bliss, have stolen gently over us, and we have arisen full of its tranquil peace, and in the deep gazes of hallowed tenderness have we felt that love is heaven ; heaven, love.

If, then, love can exist in this creation, yea, and gather an intensity of delight from its beautiful materialism, why should that materialism be altogether banished from heaven ? We may be told that the general tone of the Scriptures discounte-

nances such a view, but in this we differ. We there see that the prophets and the sweet singer of Israel were deeply impressed with the loveliness and grandeur of the outward universe ; every passage of their writings teems with some reference to them. The winds are made the symbols of the Almighty's power ; the stars are emblems of his majesty ; the trees of the forest, and even the wild flowers of the field, are all significant of his goodness.

Nor is this all. When the Lord of Hosts speaks, he employs them as tokens of his pleasure or anger, his mercy or justice, his wrath or love ; they are the expression of the Divine mind to the sons of men ; nor, when the new dispensation awakens on the world, and enkindles the horizon with an everlasting brightness, is the fact altered. The Messiah gathers his most beautiful arguments from the lilies of the field and the birds of the air ; they carry, with them a force which no sophistry can overturn ; there is a grace and dignity about them, a freshness and loveliness which move strangely the heart.

Creation is thus used to illustrate the grand doctrines of everlasting truth ; its Maker does not content himself with barely and simply declaring the fact that he is love, but points to the material universe in confirmation, and as affording one of its most striking proofs. And well he may tell us to look there. Is not this world, even in its present state, an invincible argument for its truth ? Does not every floweret of the field, every wild rose of the straggling lane, every limpid current, and every

swelling river, beam brightly with the affection of the Most High?—does not every tree and every leaf bear the impress of the tenderness and regard of One who rules above? And when we gaze on inanimate nature, with its varied scenery bedecked with so much loveliness, sweetness, and sublimity, can we otherwise than feel that its Author is in very deed the God of love?

The universe is a token of the Deity's regard; it is the working out of his affection; it is the seal of his benevolence; it is the substantial proof of his mercy; it gleams with spotless beauty; it is en-robed in untainted grace; it ever sends up the sweet cadences of song; it glows with unceasing music; and each sound and sight, whether it be the soft, silvery strain of confiding hope, or the tremendous and sublime stirring of the storm, or whether it be the calm and quiet landscape of England, or the rugged and magnificent scenery of Switzerland, yet do they all breathe out alike the goodness and care of God.

Would He illustrate the mysterious workings of his Providence, he points to the birds of the air and the grass of the field; would he speak of his power, he bids us view the hurricane, and the deep roll of the majestic ocean; would he tell us of his dominion, he unveils the cattle on a thousand hills, and the magnificence of the midnight sky; would he describe the vivifying effect of true holiness, he brings it forward under the figure of the water, the fountain, the river; would he enforce the doctrine of man's resurrection, he employs the seed which

is cast into the ground, and yet becomes a beautiful flower or a leafy tree ; would he inform us of the brightness of the eternal kingdom, he places his finger on the stars ; yea, would he make known to us his love, he creates a world !

We find, then, that the soul, when stirred up by affection, draws exquisite delight from this material creation, and that Jehovah himself makes use of its several objects to illustrate the doctrines of revelation ; and we have only again to look into that Word, and we believe we may trace some proofs for the presence of nature in the blessed world. Is there any reason why we should be deprived of snow-crowned mountains, and gentle, undulating slopes, and flowery meads, and golden clouds, and the dim loveliness of twilight, and the splendour of the starry night ? Can we see no wonder in these to move our praise ?—can we behold no manifestation of their Creator ?—nothing of Divine skill ?—in the myrtle and in the oak, are there no indications of infinite wisdom and infinite power ?—is there nothing to elevate our spirit and teach us a deeper homage ? Why are these to be banished ?—why for ever exiled ? Are the Maker's works so imperfect that it is possible for us to reach beyond them ?—rather, are they not so exquisitely faultless that the highest stretch of intellect will never be able to scan all their beauty and all their grace ? Does not every new addition of knowledge, and every new discovery, awaken at the same time a new sense of their perfection ? are the ignorant as deeply impressed with their inimitable workmanship as the

learned?—is the sensualist so moved with rapture at their Divine loveliness as the lover of the good?

If, then, in our best and holiest seasons creation blushes with its most enchanting beauty, and if it is a truth that the more polluted we become, so much the more our sense for its fair and exquisite charms becomes deadened, then it necessarily follows that the purer our lives, and the higher our condition in the scale of moral and intellectual greatness, so much the more will our faculties become sensitively alive to its resplendent glories and its perfect loveliness. Think we that when sin is bound down to hell, and the bosom pervaded by divine affection, that the daisy and the violet will shame their Creator?—Think we that the angels receive no delight in gazing on the rich and varied prospects of nature? Why did they burst into loud hymnings at the birth of our lovely planet?—why those acclamations of the morning stars, if they revelled not in the freshness of the new-created earth, and had no eye for its untainted sweets?

All that proceeds from the hands of God is faultless; and if so, it follows that the mind can never be so far exalted as to regard his works with indifference. A flower is the handiwork of the Divinity, and can He create an object devoid of beauty? If not, then it must be that the soul, however raised and however dignified, can never reap any other emotions but those of delight whilst gazing on its matchless perfection.

It may be objected to this that there are many deformed and loathsome objects in the world around

us ; but it should be recollected that we are speaking of a region where sin is not, and where deformity cannot enter, and arguing that the material creation in its most perfect forms is not inconsistent with the highest intellectual vigour and most unsullied purity.

But it seems from what we generally hear that we shall be too holy and too spiritual to regard such labours of the Eternal with anything approaching to delight or pleasure. Is it not dishonouring Him whom we serve, to say that the beautiful operations of his wisdom and power will be ever beneath our regard ? If He could pronounce them very good, then is it not wrong in us to say that they are not in accordance with the essential purity of heaven ?—what ! not the soft balmy summer sky, and the genial warmth of spring, and the silver crescent, and the twinkling stars, and the music of land and water in sweet agreement with the calm unruffled serenity of that rest which is above ?

The great God, the highest spiritual essence, delights in the universe which his breath created. It is allowed that nothing which could receive his approbation could be devoid of grace ; He is beauty itself ; and such could not issue from under his fingers, bearing the impress of his approval, without being beautiful and perfect ; deformity cannot come from him ; He is the altogether lovely ; and all his works are imprinted with the same exquisite grace and exquisite loveliness.

Before this creation had any existence, its idea was conceived by the Eternal, and as he is perfectly

holy, it is clear that its conception would yield delight ; every thought and every action of such a Being must breathe happiness and peace. If the conception gave pleasure, surely the working it out in its minute details, as well as its bold and magnificent outline, would of necessity bring the richest enjoyment ; and hence when He gazed on the stupendous operation of his power—looked upon it in all its dawning beauty and splendour, we read that He pronounced it very good.

Since it has been shown that the material universe is not incompatible with the Supreme, and since, then, it cannot be inconsistent with the highest and most unsullied purity, it follows that we shall never be too holy nor too spiritual to regard its glories with indifference.

Nor must it be forgotten that the outward creation borrows much of its beauty from the soul—"Nature always wears the colours of the spirit."—Mind is the omnipotent adorer of the universe ; it invests its every object with a tenfold charm ; it breathes over its every form a nameless loveliness. What is it that gives so deep a witchery to the twilight-hour?—is it not the associations of bygone years, memories of our beloved ones, scenes of childhood, hopes of unfading bliss? Is it not, too, our ethereal part that awakens in each rustle of the leaf, in each gurgling sound of waters, in each coo of the dove, some remembrance of the past, or else some music of the future? Why do we love the summer with its soft golden clouds, voice of birds, and perfume of a thousand flowers? Is it not

that every object is connected with some thrilling thought of former days, or teems with the deepest manifestations of a parent's love? And when looking upwards on the vast vault, spangled with a million stars, why do we feel those throbings and stirrings as if the heart would burst? Is it not that our immortal essence comprehends the truth of the being and attributes of God, and links each orb, as it rolls majestically along the infinitude of space, with its Divine Creator? Take away this knowledge, and where is nature's enchanting grace? Enlarge the conception, increase the love, etherealize the whole man, and then tell us if you do not, with a quicker ken, and a higher affection, and a loftier spirituality, behold in this magnificent universe a brighter illustration of the Eternal's power and goodness, than ye did when girt around with ignorance and bounded in by a feeble and glimmering light?

If, then, it is the soul that adorns this outspreading creation, may it not be conceived that as the soul progresses in purity and holiness, so will it throw around the visible universe a deeper and a sweeter beauty? Let man awake to love, and immediately what was dull and meaningless before becomes at once speaking and full of expression; tints of Paradise are seen streaking the horizon with orient hues; flowers of Eden waft their perfumes over the earth; a fairer and a softer light beams from the sky; each cloud is more divinely bright; each star sparkles with an intenser lustre; the grass is clothed with a greener verdure; a

deep, delicious music is in every sound ; the winds chant a more exquisite song ; the roll of ocean's waves is subdued to a gentle liquid cadence ; love veils the creation with a thousand graces ; there is a freshness and a loveliness as of spring.

Now it is well known that the world was the same before we dreamt of love, and yet what difference !—how is this ?—what is the cause ?—the soul—that has become spiritualized ; the mind is changed, not the universe ; in its purer feelings and aspirations, the earth has put on all the dewy charms of a new creation.

If, then, the universe appears so much more beautiful when the spirit becomes alive to its own nature, with what a deeper majesty will it be invested when that spirit is made perfect in love ! In heaven we shall be thus perfect ; and it will be there, too, that each sense will be gratified with every sweet and lovely form. The perceptions will be more exquisite, the taste faultless, the ear more attuned to godlike music, the eye breathing out a deeper ocean of eternal tenderness, and the soul more capable of adorning earth, sea, and sky with inexpressible glories. Jehovah's creation shall then stand in our estimation higher than it ever stood before, and stir up every feeling of our heart to praise, magnify, and laud the Everlasting.

Spiritualize our nature, and you, as it were, create anew the earth ; deaden its finer energies and thoughts, and you darken the universe of God.

But, it may be said, that at death man will be changed. We cannot admit this : for if he has

been renewed by the Holy Ghost, he already possesses eternal life ; that principle which will wholly influence him in heaven has already dawned ; his celestial being has commenced ; his holier existence begun. It is, we know, but a mere glimmering of light, but still it is the beam of that same sun : this cannot be disguised. That which throws so sweet and soft a glory on his path now, is the same which will illumine his future home with all the splendours of an infinite day.

And if this principle delights in the hills and dales of earth, it cannot fail to reap a kindred pleasure when quickened and enlarged under the eternal sunshine of heaven. Did death change this new nature, this new being, then our argument fails ; but death does not change it ; the divine life is already a part of the future existence ; and if it is gratified with a leaf or flower here, it will be equally gratified with a leaf or flower there.

But still there may remain the objection—we shall be as the angels. We believe this, because Christ has told us so : but it is no real objection ; it is rather a proof of our proposition. We have seen that those spiritual natures possess a perception of beauty, and an appreciating taste for the outward loveliness of the universe, when they sent up immortal harmonies as the birth-star glistened in this lower world. If, therefore, they can reap joy and delight from the manifold glories of creation, and as we are to be like them, it follows that we, too, shall receive a deep and glowing gratification from the same exquisite objects.

Carrington's other poem, the Banks of Tamar, breathes the same spirit and tone as Dartmoor, and has all its descriptive beauty and liquid tenderness. Our limits forbid us to cull any of its fragrant flowers ; we therefore turn to his minor pieces, several of which are, perhaps, more strikingly characteristic of their author. There is much sublimity in The Storm and The Gamester, both of which are written in a masterly manner. How fine is the following :—

Narrow the entrance. Two misshapen rocks
Rushed up on either hand, and overhung
Awhile the darkened path, but all within
Lay in the golden sunshine. Soon was heard
The low, sweet music of a thousand rills
Crossing the sward luxuriant, and the rush
Of mightier streams was heard, that, far off, leaped
Into the echoing valley. Wider spread
The glen ; and darker, higher rose the cliffs ;
And greenly grew the beautiful moist grass ;
And brighter bloomed the flowers—such flowers as love
A mountain home ; and from the clefts the broom
Looked out ; and in the sunshine smiled the heath—
The bonny heath ; and in that valley's breeze
Waved from the precipice the light-leaved ash ;
And here and there the aged, stunted oak
Leaned o'er the crumbling brink. At once the war
Of rock and river burst upon the eye
And ear astonished. High above, the streams,
Fed from exhaustless founts, rushed headlong on,
Where, all uninjured, lay the mountain rocks
Magnificently strewed, and broke the power
That broke in thunder through them, and upflung
Their sun-touched foam-wreaths to the pleasant gale
That played around inconstant.

Broader now
The broken stream rolled onwards, yet deprived

Of half its fierceness. By the opposing rocks.
It swept, in beautiful motion, and the eye
Looked on the bright confusion—looked and beamed
With pleasure, and a gentle calm diffused.
Its influence o'er the spirit, as the tones
Most musical, through all the languid noon,
Rose of the broad blue waters.

Pleasantly

Were interspersed green islets—loved retreats
Of birds that love the streams. The river flowed
Darkly beneath the leafage—dark and calm
A moment—and again, with voice far heard,
Rushed o'er its pure and glittering bed. The bank
Now rose precipitous, and from the brink,
Broken into a thousands bays, the trees,
In strange association with the cliffs,
Again upclimbed the slopes. Rock, bush, and flower
Were there in sweetest union. Hardy, old,
Stunted, yet vigorous, the oak outflung
His arms above the crag ; his scalp was bare
And lifeless as that crag he shadowed : struck
By time or lightning—yet a living thing
Still joying in the sunshine.

Midway yawned

A cavern ; and bright, and bursting from its jaws
Into the day, a highland torrent flashed
Upon the eye. Adown the wooded slopes,
Leaping from steep to steep, it came, and flung
Its music on the air of that wild place—
Wild, yet most beautiful. A silver shower
Eternal drizzled there ; and near it grew
The moisture-loving moss, arrayed in green
That rivalled the clear emerald ; and plants
Of freshest leaf, and flowers that fill their cups
With mountain dews, but wither in the beam
Of southern skies. One solitary bird,
To the deep voices of that waterfall,
Responsive sung a strange but lovely strain,
Like the soft gurgling which the streamlets make,
Sweet playing with the pebbles. Never sound

Within that holy sanctuary rise
Ruder than bird's heart-refreshing strains,
Or voice of winds, or the undying flow
Of the complaining waters !

This graphic description recalls to our mind the beautiful valley of the Dove. Many years have flown by since we wandered along the banks of its limpid waters ; but time has not robbed those long-remembered hours of their charming sweets ; rather hath it added a deeper witchery. There is ever something peculiarly soothing in reviewing those spots we visit in youth : the spirit instinctively turns with a pleasing, though pensive, delight to those bright and sunny scenes : and when the dark clouds of sorrow shut out the clear, blue heavens, we return to them as to some shady, forest-embosomed home, where the storm, the blast and the hurricane are never heard, and around which the wild flowers blossom and bloom eternally.

In this manner have we often lived over again the period we spent at Dovedale. We have since revisited its region of loveliness ; no blight was there : changes had taken place in the interval among mankind, but this spot stood untouched. The face of friendship had grown pale, and the grave had upheaved its earth to receive the forms of those beloved ones whose smile was light to our dwelling ; but this secluded and peaceful dell looked as fresh and as gay as when first beheld. We gazed on each well-known path, each unforgotten scene, as upon some long-cherished companion. Ah, how often had it refreshed the soul when oppressed and

heavy laden ! Yes, we have turned from the lofty Ben Lomond, the blue summits of Snowdon, the secluded banks of Eamont's stream, and deemed this simple valley, with its splintered rocks, its dark green foliage, its beautiful flowers, its clear river, and its memories of olden times, even a sweeter and calmer rest from the toil of existence, and a more peaceful and unbroken haven for the aspirations of the spirit.

It was the leafy month of June that we chose for our visit to Dovedale, when the gale is burdened with the scent of new-made hay : when the birds sing in the woods, and the butterfly roves amid the myriad flowers ; when the corn waves in the fields, and the hedgerows fling out their unnumbered sweets ; and when the sky is all one unclouded blue. The very month is entwined with memories of joy and gladness ; and although May is more refreshing and invigorating, still June breathes a softer and more delicious voluptuousness.

On the first day of this glorious month we set off ; it was a beautiful morning ; the carols of the birds, the fine azure heavens, the luxuriant foliage, the woodbine, rose, and elder waving in the hedges, and the quiet loveliness of nature, filled the heart with a rapturous joy. We rode onward, passing the gates of old and venerable halls, and through several villages, with their rustic cottages and ancient churches. The road was finely wooded until we entered Derbyshire ; then, instead of green hedges, thick underwood, and wide spreading plantations, we saw nothing but dull stone walls and

far-stretched fields. We continued our journey, and at length saw before us Dovedale—the valley of the Dove! and to one whose love of creation is a passion, there is no scene more soothing than a still and lonely dell. Every tumultuous emotion is calmed ; every feeling subdued ; there is an air of undisturbed repose which contrasts strangely with the bustle of life. The appearance of the vale from the distance is very striking ; its wild simplicity, its high hills, its dark green shrubs, its scattered sheep, its grey sides seen just as the sun is sinking westward, and the breeze begins to play, are not without a thrilling and binding power.

The memories of the past came over us. Here, in days gone by, lingered the good old Izaak Walton, and his friend Cotton ; here, too, the open-hearted Goldsmith, Sir Humphrey Davy, Byron, and James Montgomery have rambled. All have spoken of its charms, but none with so much grace and beauty as the venerable angler : he has shed a hallowed influence on stream, and hill, and dale ; and to one whom he had enchanted with his mellowed page, this dell could not otherwise than be deeply interesting. Around the region he has thrown a classic loveliness ; by its clear waters did he stroll, and often would he pause and drink in the glory of creation. How eloquently would he talk of honeysuckle hedges, April showers, sunny skies, and meadows sprinkled with the daisy and the cowslip ; indeed, so great was his love for this stream, that a cottage was raised in one of its most romantic nooks for the reception of fishers, and

over the door was inscribed the cipher of his own and his brother's name. It remains in much the same state as when first erected, and the description of Viator is not unsuitable now: "It stands in a kind of peninsula, with a delicate clear river about it; I am the most pleased with this little house of anything I ever saw. I dare hardly go in, lest I should not like it so well within as without; but by your leave I'll try. Why, this is better and better: fine lights, finely wainscoted, and all exceeding neat, with a marble table in the middle."

Dovedale is about four miles north-west of Ashbourne—a pretty old-fashioned town, containing one of the most beautiful churches in the kingdom, and an ancient grammar-school. Ashbourne also possesses a peculiar interest from the visits of Johnson, and from Prince Charles Stuart having twice passed through its streets with his brave followers, in the memorable 1745.

The length of the valley is nearly three miles; and its breadth in no part exceeds more than a quarter, whilst in many places it is so narrow as scarcely to leave a passage for its beautiful river. Its stream divides Staffordshire from Derbyshire, the sides of which present somewhat different features: whilst the banks of the former are clothed with a luxuriant vegetation, the banks of the latter are destitute of shrub and tree. The hills that shut in this romantic dale are steep, and their sharp-pointed rocks, overgrown with ivy, moss, and lichen, rising upwards amongst the green summer foliage, have the appearance of ruined castles and

time-worn minsters : over all is cast an unruffled stillness, which the low dashing of the water does little to disturb.

We put up at the Izaak Walton, from which the entrance of the dell is seen. In a few moments, we commenced our walk down the valley, first passing across a rustic bridge, and at length reached Reynard's Cave, before which rises a magnificent natural arch. This spot possesses a mournful interest. A dignitary of the church, Dr. Langton, Dean of Clogher, while on a visit at Longford Hall, in July, 1761, spent a day at Dovedale, and on returning, he proposed to ride up this steep acclivity, when Miss La Roche, a lady of the party, offered to accompany him on the same horse. In its attempt upwards, the animal fell, and the clergyman received such injuries that he died in a few hours ; the youthful companion was, however, more fortunate, and escaped with a few slight bruises. Gazing from under this vast archway upon the scene below, the mind soon puts on a solemnity of thought and feeling.

We began to return about nine ; only one single star shot forth its solitary light, and the dale at this time was awfully grand. Our feelings were inexpressible : in a glen—hearing the rush of waters—the lone star serving to make darkness visible—at intervals a bird flitting by—the boughs voiceless—the drowsy tinkling of the sheep-bell borne on the breeze were beautifully sublime ! In such an hour the thoughts were led to subjects of strange import : never shall we forget the thrilling sensibility that

almost overpowered our bosom. From earth the spirit ascended to the Eternal—it felt itself to be a part of the Everlasting Mind; and then again it returned to earth. Might not this be the only land wherein the banner of rebellion was unfurled and uplifted, was the fancy that crossed over the soul,—whether transgression had dimmed the glories of yonder world, which now twinkled so brightly in the dark hemisphere, or whether it was the abode of peace, was a question continually started: it was in accordance with the pensive shadows of the night, and blended with all the emotions of the heart.

We sat at the evening repast in silence; our thoughts were strangely solemn, our dreams partook of the same character. In a lonely dell we walked, and then the soul seemed lifted aloft into the pure ether, and there were scenes of wonder, and glorious beauty, and mighty shapes, and low, liquid melodies, and flowers of every hue and form, and skies serenely bright, and dwellings rose-clustered, lovely as the opening dawn; and then again we were rambling along the dark, dim, solitary valley, and we listened to its rushing waters, and gazed upon the silver light of its single star, and thought ——!

The soft, still radiance of day came stealing in at the window, and awoke us: our eye turned instinctively towards the dell. Soon after breakfast, we started on our way to Ilam Hall, the seat of Jesse Watts Russell, Esq. After crossing the river Manifold, by a neat bridge, we soon arrived at the

entrance gates. A pretty path led to the church. We love to see a good old English church ! Those dear grey piles, with their spires and towers, are the pride of our villages, the beauty of our cities, and the glory of our land: "Crowning a flowery slope it stood alone in gracious sanctity." The ancient fane, overgrown with dark green ivy, presents a very picturesque appearance; but the principal object of attraction is the mausoleum, containing a sculptured group, by Chantry, in memory of Pike Watts, the father of the late Mrs. Watts Russell. It is a small gothic chapel, of octagonal shape, erected on the north side of the church: the monument is exquisite. The venerable old man is represented as bestowing his parting blessing on his daughter and her little ones during the midnight hour. The effect is strikingly solemn; every surrounding object is shut out from view by the dim religious glass of the windows; the light falls on the features of parent and children with peculiar softness: it is a spot, once seen, never forgotten; its stillness, its mellowed beams, and its touching memorial, leave their remembrance on the soul for ever.

From here, we proceeded to the mansion, "which is built of stone; its outline and elevation are remarkably good; its style is a compound of Saxon, Tudor, and Elizabethan. A fine oriel window occupies a conspicuous and central position in the principal front, to the right of which appear the painted windows of the entrance; a hanging garden supported on arches forms a bold projection

on the left ; while, towering high above the other parts of the edifice, rises the flag-turret, a noble and characteristic feature in the pile. When the flag is hoisted, fanned as it is by the mountain breezes, its crimson drapery may be seen waving at a great distance, and in some points of view, where it peeps forth, the effect is most beautiful ; to the left, and likewise in the rear of the mansion, a hanging wood of great richness and beauty clothes the declivities of a precipitous hill, at the base of which lies the rocky bed of the river Manifold : the same wood sweeping round to the eastward, forms an admirable background to the picture ; while on the right are seen the mountains of Dovedale, which have an air of dreary grandeur, contrasting strangely with the luxuriance of the wooded hills on the left."

After spending some time in the grounds, and viewing the spot where Congreve wrote several of his plays, we passed along fields covered with daisies and yellow kingcups, and sweetly scented with their many hedges, until we came to Blore church. It is a fine old church, and its village quite rustic ; it was formerly the demesne and seat of the Bassetts ; but their glory has faded. We were shown over the sacred edifice, which, although much dilapidated, is not devoid of beauty ; here are a few monumental records of its former lords ; the solemn quietness, and calm, mellowed light which prevailed, suited our mood ; the ivy had stolen through the roof, and within its walls a bird had built her nest.

We turned from the sacred pile, and rested

ourselves for awhile at the parsonage ; the social blessedness of its inmates was no mean appendage to the church. We then ascended some hills that led us back to Dovedale, and rambled again among its romantic scenes. The sun was now in mid-heaven ; every breeze lagged ; the murmuring of the waters sounded strangely in this spot of unruffled silence ; the rocks uprearing their fronts to the sky, clothed with lichens, moss, and thyme, and the clear stream, sweetly flowing through its banks, adorned with wild flowers, looked beautiful and gay beneath the serene blue of day : it was a place for silent musing and delicious dreams ; its charms had power to loosen imagination's wings—and how wide its flights ! Combinations of all richest sounds rolled on the ear ; and there was music in the cloudless firmament and the fair earth. We rambled along winding sheep-tracks, and often sat down beneath some impending rock. The river glided onwards, now purling in sweet melody, and now rushing down some small cataract with hoarse music ; the voice of birds had ceased ; creation lay still and motionless beneath the noon tide heat. Walton and Cotton were not forgotten in this quiet season.

In the evening, we ascended Thorpe Cloud, a steep hill that overlooks the valley ; a few sheep were scattered on its sides. The winds had risen, and blew tremendously ; the shadows of night came slowly down ; the waters, and the dell, and the splintered rocks, and the foliage, and the wild flower, were soon enveloped in gloom ; the fine sun

had departed, and a few gleams of sullen grandeur were all that could be distinguished in the distant horizon ; the gale rushed furiously up the mountain ; a light or two glimmered in the darkness, issuing, perhaps, from some secluded home. We sat in silence ; our thoughts were tinged with a sweet solemnity ; the calm beauty of the day, and the fair loveliness of creation, and the romantic dell, and the time-worn buildings of former years, and the ancient churches, and the exquisite monumental record of a child's affection, had disposed the mind to serious musing ; the sheep-bell, borne upwards by the sounding wind, awoke us from our meditative trance, and we descended to the inn, softened, subdued, and calmed.

The following day, we took our last look at Dovedale ; we lingered among its winding sheep-tracks, its beautiful walks along the gushing stream, its meadows, and its romantic scenes, in that gaze. On our way to Friar's Wood, we visited Alton Towers and Wotton Lodge ; and though not connected with this quiet dell, still, as they were beheld during the same visit, they are for ever associated with it. After a ride of nine miles, we came upon the former—the splendid seat of the Earl of Shrewsbury ; its style is the modern Gothic, and when seen at a distance, with its rising towers, its effect is very imposing. Its grounds are, however, the chief attraction ; and here we have the dark, green foliage, the beautiful flowers, the murmuring fountains, the high-domed conservatories, the sculptured marble, the antique vases, and the

romantic cottage, reposing in the quietude and enchanting loveliness of a long-extended valley—it is as some oriental dream.

From here a short stroll brought us to Wotton Lodge. Never were we more delighted with a mansion ; it is a castellated building, standing embosomed in well-wooded hills. It was garrisoned by the royalists during the civil wars, and defended by Sir Richard Fleetwood, but was soon taken by the Parliamentarians. “It is situated in as solemnly striking a solitude,” writes Howitt, “as one can well conceive: it stands up aloft, on a natural terrace overlooking a deep winding glen, and surrounded by sloping uplands, deep masses of wood, and the green heights of Weaver, in a situation of solitary beauty, which exceedingly delighted me. Not a person was visible throughout the profoundly silent scene ; scarcely a house was within view. I ascended to the front of the lodge, and stood in admiration of its aspect : its tall, square bulk of dark grey stone, with its turreted front, full of large, square mullioned windows ; its paved court, and ample flight of steps ascending to its porched door ; its old garden, with terraces and pleached hedges on the south slope below it ; and deep again below that, dark ponds visible amongst the wild growth of trees. The house stood, without a smoke, without a sign of life or movement about it, in the broad sunshine of noon. I advanced, and rang the bell in the porch, but no one answered me. It was, for all the world, like a hall of old romance laid under an enchanted spell. I rang again, but all

was silent. I descended the flight of steps, and paced the grey pavement of the court, and was about to withdraw, when an old woman opened the casement in the highest story, and said, in a slow, dreamy voice, ‘I am coming down.’”

Ere twilight had again darkened the earth, we reached our pleasant home, with the beauty of Dovedale and its adjacent scenery engraven on the heart for ever.

COLERIDGE.

COLERIDGE—the dreamer, as many term him—was one of the most remarkable of men. It is his very dreaminess that we love: many are the beautiful, wild, and sublime combinations that we have in gentle slumberings. Indeed, some of our loveliest pictures have been presented in dreams: there has been a richer colouring, a softer tint, a browner shade, more magnificent bursts of melody, more silvery tones, more delicious scents, a fairer moon, a brighter sun, more spiritual beauty breathing from the stars, a deeper music in the hum of bee and song of bird, more soothing twilights, more enchanting daybreaks, looks more piercing, glances more tender, vows more fervent, and aspirations higher, loftier, and more majestic.

Keats, too, was a dreamer—he could “dream deliciously.” He may be wanting in masculine energy and power; but he fully makes up for this in sweetness of thought and diction; he melts his readers; his lines are luscious; he is the very spirit of love; his *Endymion* is full of all charming things; it is the dream of a soul redolent of earth’s freshness and glory. He is one of the most luxurious of writers; his verses tremble with sweetness;

they are flower-scented and flower-tinted ; there is the odour of the rose, the woodbine, and pink ; “ they are like the scent of a bank of violets, faint and rich, which the gale suddenly conveys in a different direction ; ” the soft blue sky, the light green meadows, the silver voice of the lark, the gentle music of the trees, the melody of streams, the black tresses of woman, and woman’s tenderness and devotedness, the unutterable bliss of pure attachment, and the eternal language of imperishable faith, are visioned in his poetry : they become vital ; they live. It is like some old garden, where every shape and form of beauty suns itself beneath the summer heaven, but which has been neglected and forgotten. There is a wild luxuriance, a straggling and endless wealth ; his words seem dipped in honey ; he revels in the calm serenity of creation ; you hear the murmuring of the rippling waters, and the deep, low sounds of the wild woods.

He was nature itself—as divine, as rich, as delicious ; like some “ airy voyager on life’s stream, his mind inhaled the fragrance of a thousand shores, and drank of endless pleasures under halcyon skies ; ” he seemed to float on softest clouds ; he was the incense of flowers ; everything he said was music—“ The same that rises over vernal groves, mingled with the breath of morning, and the perfumes of the wild hyacinth ; ” he weltered in sweets ; he talked of beauty ; and there were silver sounds. No man ever imaged the universe more truly : the fair and blushing charms of heaven and earth glow in all his paintings, and he was sublime ; his

Hyperion is a magnificent and massive fragment. The boy had a gigantic soul ; it was endowed with grandeur and tremendous power.

It is true, he has written much nonsense ; but it is sweet nonsense. Other men's is harsh and grating ; but this is as a lively strain of music ; it took the hue and colouring of his own star-lit fancy ; he bathed in the blue empyrean, and afterwards slept and dreamt on a bed of amaranths. How exquisite his opening line in *Endymion* : “A thing of beauty is a joy for ever !” It is dropping with nectar : the sweet, soft streams meandering through flowery meadows ; “trees, young and old, sprouting a shady boon for simple sheep ;” “a crocus bursting out of the ground and blushing with its own golden light ;” the serene blue of heaven ; the chiming brook ; the slant beam of the sun lighting up some dark copse ; the murmur of gnats in the calm eventide of summer ; the chirping of birds in the low dell ; “wild thyme, and valley-lilies whiter still than Leda’s love ;” the dew sparkling gem-like on the grass, “caught from the early sobbing of the morn ;” the kindling dawn ; the new fresh spring “when first the whitethorn blows ;” “a bush of May-flowers with the bees about them ;” “the mid-forest brake, rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms ;” the purple butterfly ; the orange blossom ; the silver ray glancing through the green leaves, as they tremble in the breeze ; “daffodils that come before the swallow dares, and take the winds of March with beauty ;” the sound of the village bell ; “clumps of woodbine taking the soft wind upon

their summer thrones ; ” “ the shells on the sea-sand ; ” the low cottage with the vine climbing its windows ; the steeple of some old church ; the child playing with its companion ; the infant reposing on the fond bosom of its mother ; the first prayer ; the domestic hymn, are all things of beauty, and are joys for ever !

Coleridge is master of imperishable thought ; many of his strains cannot die away ; they breathe the music of immortality : his verse is inspired with all the divinity of poetry ; it is steeped in the essence of eternity ; its mighty influences sweep over the spirit as everlasting symphonies from an angel’s harp. There is both a subtle beauty and a stirring grandeur about them : they kindle the enthusiasm of the soul ; they move the keenest sensibilities of the heart. He writes with an energy which exalts, a sweetness which melts ; at times, he stands on the mountain’s brow, and the storm is the music he loves ; but at other seasons, he reclines on some mossy bank, beneath the clear silver moonlight, and the soft breeze is the melody he chooses. The Ancient Mariner is a tale of supernatural beauty : we are entranced while perusing it ; we become isolated, we are bound by some wild, deep spell ; it is a strain of another existence ; there are unearthly witcheries about it ; it is sweeter than the murmur of a dream ; it is the production of a brilliant imagination in some eventide when its brightness became, as it were, a soft, golden light. Madame de Staël says : “ It is a great art in certain fictions to imitate by words the solemn stillness

which imagination pictures in the empire of darkness and death ;” and Coleridge has succeeded in this to admiration.

Christabel belongs to the same class ; illustrates our poet’s theory of an intimate connexion between this and the unseen world ; its imagery is as singular, and perhaps more so, whilst its versification is as strangely modulated. It is unfinished, and we are glad that it is so : another note might have jarred its exquisite music, another word might have rolled a cloud over its enchanting beauty ; another line might have been as some dark storm, dispelling its thousand sweets. As it stands, we love it ; it is a fragment of something wondrous ; it is a figment of something mysterious : it reminds us of some soft hymn heard for a moment in fancy, when the moon is up, across a narrow stream : another minute, and the delicious delusion is gone. Just so with this poem ; its strain is as silvery and as momentary ; there is a wildness and a dimness. We ask questions who and what ; but no answer can we get ; all is enveloped in strangeness and loneliness : we try to break the spell, but cannot ; we endeavour to free ourselves from the sorcery, but are unable ; we are fascinated almost to pain ; the very language is something marvellous.

His odes are finely written, and display profound thought and sublime imagination. Those on France and to the Departing Year are magnificent. Coleridge is much a kindred spirit with Beethoven ; they both rise above the earth into a wider and a more ethereal atmosphere ; they breathe immortal

air; their music is of the infinite heaven: both pensive and soothing at seasons, they alike swell with enthusiasm, and pour out such bursts of glorious, oceanic minstrelsy as seem to bear one into a sea of all majestic sounds. Mass on mass follows; sweep on sweep. Ere we recover ourselves from the first ponderous notes, we are thrilled by others of deeper power: the rolling of the thunders, and the surging of the ever-tumultuous waters are heard. It is peal succeeding peal, clap on clap; it is crash following crash; dashing waves ever breaking on the shore, or against some huge rock; the very elements mingle in chaotic confusion, clashings, jarrings, tremendous sounds, and yet all is the divinest harmony. There is sunshine, and flowers, and waving tree, and hum of bees, and silvery tones of eventide, and exquisite melodies of love. They string their lyres to the lofty symphonies of the angelic choir; they make sky and earth one everlasting chord; with their sublime outbreaks the soul is, as it were, torn from its socket. Listen:—

Hast thou a charm to stay the morning-star
In his steep course? So long he seems to pause
On thy bald, awful head, O sovran Blanc!
The Arve and Arveiron at thy base
Rave ceaselessly; but thou, most awful form!
Risest from forth thy silent sea of pines,
How silently! Around thee and above
Deep is the air and dark, substantial, black;
An ebon mass: methinks thou piercest it,
As with a wedge! But when I look again,
It is thine own calm home, thy crystal shrine,
Thy habitation from eternity!
O dread and silent mount! I gazed upon thee,

Till thou, still present to the bodily sense,
Didst vanish from my thought: entranced in prayer,
I worshipped the Invisible alone.

Yet, like some sweet beguiling melody,
So sweet, we know not we are listening to it,
Thou, the meanwhile, wast blending with my thought,
Yea, with my life and life's own secret joy:
Till the dilating soul, enrapt, transfused
Into the mighty vision passing—then,
As in her natural form, swelled vast to heaven !

Awake, my soul! not only passive praise
Thou owest! not alone these swelling tears,
Mute thanks and secret ecstasy! Awake,
Voice of sweet song! Awake, my heart, awake!
Green vales and icy cliffs, all join my hymn!

Thou first and chief, sole sovran of the vale!
O struggling with the darkness all the night,
And visited all night by troops of stars,
Or when they climb the sky, or when they sink:
Companion of the morning-star at dawn,
Thyself earth's rosy star, and of the dawn
Co-herald: wake, O wake, and utter praise!
Who sank thy sunless pillars deep in earth?
Who filled thy countenance with rosy light?
Who made thee parent of perpetual streams?

And you, ye five wild torrents fiercely glad!
Who called you forth from night and utter death,
From dark and icy caverns called you forth,
Down those precipitous, black, jagged rocks,
For ever shattered, and the same for ever?
Who gave you your invulnerable life,
Your strength, your speed, your fury, and your joy,
Unceasing thunder and eternal foam?
And who commanded—and the silence came,—
Here let the billows stiffen, and have rest?

Ye ice-falls! ye that from the mountain's brow
Adown enormous ravines slope amain—
Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty voice,
And stopped at once, amid their maddest plunge!

Motionless torrents ! Silent cataracts !
 Who made you glorious as the gates of heaven,
 Beneath the keen, full moon ? Who bade the sun
 Clothe you with rainbows ? Who, with living flowers
 Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your feet ?
 God ! let the torrents, like a shout of nations,
 Answer ! and let the ice-plains echo, God !
 God ! sing, ye meadow-streams, with gladsome voice ;
 Ye pine-groves, with your soft and soul-like sounds ;
 And they, too, have a voice, yon piles of snow,
 And in their perilous fall shall thunder, God !

Ye living flowers that skirt th' eternal frost,
 Ye wild goats sporting round the eagle's nest,
 Ye eagles, playmates of the mountain-storm,
 Ye lightnings, the dread arrows of the clouds,
 Ye signs and wonders of the element,
 Utter forth God, and fill the hills with praise.

Thou, too, hoar mount, with thy sky-pointing peaks,
 Oft from whose feet the avalanche, unheard,
 Shoots downward, glittering through the pure serene
 Into the depth of clouds that veil thy breast :
 Thou, too, again, stupendous mountain ; thou
 That, as I raise my head, awhile bowed low
 In adoration, upward from thy base ;
 Slow travelling, with dim eyes suffused with tears,
 Solemnly seemest, like a vapoury cloud,
 To rise before me,—rise, O ever rise,
 Rise like a cloud of incense from the earth :
 Thou, kingly spirit, throned among the hills,
 Thou dread Ambassador from earth to heaven,
 Great Hierarch, tell thou the silent sky,
 And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun,
 Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God.

Our poet's translation of Wallenstein is executed in a masterly and brilliant manner ; he has entered so fully into the spirit of its author, that it loses nothing in its English dress. His Zapoya—imitated from Shakspeare's Winter's Tale—and

his Remorse, a tragedy, exhibit all the beauties and all the faults of his style. They are more suited for the closet than the stage; thought enhances their value, and opens up many unperceived graces: they are, however, deficient in energy and passion; but as works of genius, they, perhaps, have not been excelled in modern times.

Coleridge's poetry is a combination of the subtle witcheries of a calm, unruffled summer's eve, and the awe-inspiring grandeur of an autumnal sunset in a mountainous district. Thou hast seen, O reader, when sauntering along the straggling pathway of some lone wood, the day growing dim and dimmer; and thou hast heard the song of thrush in yon tall trees, and the leap of squirrel, and the murmuring of gnats, and the rustling of the leaves, and the stir of branches, and the lowing of the kine, and the silver music of the chapel-bell, and the gentle purling of the rill, and the distant hum of the great city; and thou hast felt a soothing influence steal over thy being as of elysian rest: and as the twilight has become more vague and indistinct, and the shadows more solemnly beautiful, thou hast felt that quietude becoming sweet and sweeter until it has borne thee far off among sunny glances and angel countenances, and soft, balmy tendernesses, and fond endearments, and liquid hymnings, and holiest breathings, and hallowed melodies, and flowers, and stars, and all the heaven of divinest things. Or, perchance, thou hast stood on ocean's sands, where they stretch away opposite the Ailsa Craig, and as the waves have beaten loud and

louder on the shore, and thrown their snow-white foam aloft beneath the stirring wind, thou hast marked the deep, dark crimson colouring of the western sky, tinting the summit of Goat-fell with clouds of blood, and ever and anon casting over the wide hemisphere, and the boundless roll of waters, and the distant ship, and the far-off rock, and the screaming sea-gull, and the rising moon, and the pale vesper, its own hues of tremendous grandeur and dread magnificence: in these two, in the enchanting loveliness of the woodland scene, and in the ponderous glory of the heaving main, we have the characteristics of our poet's song.

His love poems are exquisitely beautiful, uniting with a confiding tenderness and sweet simplicity a captivating melancholy. He has enshrined the passion in a radiance lovelier than the silver crescent: his Genevieve is inimitable: it is as enchanting as the sculptured Venus, or as Handel's delicious air, "Waft her, angels, to the skies :" it is chaste, elegant, melodious; it is the most delightful sketch of first-love we ever gazed upon; it has all its fine, delicate colouring; it is more thrilling than starlight.

The calm eventide, the soft moonlight, the ruined tower, the statue of the armed knight, the minstrel and the harp, the romantic tale, the meek and gentle maiden, the blush of affection, the hopes and fears, the confiding artlessness and trusting love, all combine to form a picture of consummate beauty and consummate truth. And the poet's language

is so exquisite—so like the music tones of heaven.
But hearken :—

All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
Are all but ministers of love,
And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I
Live o'er again that happy hour,
When midway on the mount I lay,
Beside the ruined tower.

The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene,
Had blended with the lights of eve :
And she was there, my hope, my joy,
My own dear Genevieve.

She leaned against the armed man,
The statue of the armed knight;
She stood and listened to my lay,
Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own,
My hope, my joy, my Genevieve !
She loves me best whene'er I sing
The songs that make her grieve.

I played a soft and doleful air,
I sang an old and moving story—
An old rude song that suited well
That ruin wild and hoary.

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes and modest grace ;
For well she knew I could not choose
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the knight that wore
Upon his shield a burning brand ;
And that for ten long years he wooed
The lady of the land.

I told her how he pined ; and ah !
The deep, the low, the pleading tone
With which I sang another's love,
Interpreted my own.

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes and modest grace ;
And she forgave me that I gazed
Too fondly on her face.

But when I told the cruel scorn
That crazed this bold and lovely knight,
And that he crossed the mountain-woods,
Nor rested day nor night ;

That sometimes from the savage den,
And sometimes from the darksome shade
And sometimes starting up at once,
In green and sunny glade,

There came and looked him in the face
An angel beautiful and bright ;
And that he knew it was a fiend,
This miserable knight !

And that, unknowing what he did,
He leapt amid a murderous band,
And saved from outrage worse than death
The lady of the land ;

And how she wept and clasped his knees,
And how she tended him in vain—
And ever strove to expiate
The scorn that crazed his brain.

And that she nursed him in a cave ;
And how his madness went away,
When on the yellow forest leaves
A dying man he lay ;

His dying words—but when I reached
That tenderest strain of all the ditty,
My faltering voice and pausing harp
Disturbed her soul to pity !

All impulses of soul and sense
Had thrilled my guileless Genevieve—
The music and the doleful tale,
The rich and balmy eve ;

And hopes, and fears that kindled hope,
An undistinguishable throng ;
And gentle wishes long subdued,
Subdued and cherished long !

She wept with pity and delight,
She blushed with love and virgin shame ;
And like the murmur of a dream
I heard her breathe my name.

Her bosom heaved, she stept aside ;
As conscious of my look she stept—
Then suddenly, with timorous eye,
She fled to me and wept.

She half-enclosed me with her arms,
She pressed me with a meek embrace,
And bending back her head, looked up
And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love and partly fear,
And partly 'twas a bashful art,
That I might rather feel than see
The swelling of her heart.

I calmed her fears ; and she was calm,
And told her love with virgin pride ;
And so I won my Genevieve,
My bright and beauteous bride !

COWPER.

Snow falls thickly down this winter's day; flake after flake is blown by the bleak wind against the windows of this our cottage home. It is a dreary afternoon, and dismal. The sun enveloped in dusky red, looks gloomy; and the moon just rising opposite, is cold and chilly. So on the hours pass; snow, snow, till the fields and bridge and village are covered. The "twanging horn" is heard; and the post-boy "comes, the herald of a noisy world, with spattered boots, strapped waist, and frozen locks." Day darkens into eve:—

Now stir the fire and close the shutters fast,
Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round,
And, while the bubbling and loud hissing urn
Throws up a steamy column, and the cups,
That cheer but not inebriate, wait on each,
So let us welcome peaceful evening in.

The bronzed lamp throws its mellowed light around the quiet room; an air of snug security is felt. Snow falls faster without, but within all is full of comfort. The paper is brought, "which not even critics criticise," which holds in silence the happy inmates, and "which the fair, though eloquent themselves, yet fear to break."

'Tis pleasant, through the loopholes of retreat
To peep at such a world ; to see the stir
Of the great Babel, and not feel the crowd :
To hear the roar she sends through all her gates
At a safe distance, where the dying sound
Falls a soft murmur on th' uninjured ear.
Thus sitting, and surveying thus at ease
The globe and its concerns, I seem advanced
To some secure and more than mortal height,
That liberates and exempts me from them all.
It turns, submitted to my view, turns round
With all its generations ; I behold
The tumult and am still. The sound of war
Has lost its terrors ere it reaches me ;
Grieves, but alarms me not. I mourn the pride
And avarice that makes man a wolf to man ;
Hear the faint echo of those brazen throats,
By which he speaks the language of his heart,
And sigh, but never tremble at the sound.
He travels and expatiates, as the bee
From flower to flower, so he from land to land ;
The manners, customs, policy, of all
Pay contribution to the store he gleans ;
He sucks intelligence in every clime,
And spreads the honey of his deep research
At his return—a rich repast for me.
He travels, and I too. I tread his deck,
Ascend his topmast, through his peering eyes
Discover countries, with a kindred heart
Suffer his woes, and share in his escapes ;
While fancy, like the finger of a clock,
Runs the great circuit, and is still at home.

Thus the paper brings the empire before us and seems, as the falling snow without, to make our home more comfortable and warm. How domesticated is the room. Even the pictures of innocence and beauty which adorn the crimson walls glow with a calm and delicious quietude. The fire burns

brightly; throwing its glare on the figured carpet. Sweet, meanwhile, flows on the evening.

We are far away from the busy world ; shut out from the anxiety of humanity. There is a charm in this snug domestic home which binds us to its hearth. Noiselessly pass the hours, as if they had “ silken wings.” “ The threaded steel flies swiftly, and unfelt the task proceeds ;” “ the well-depicted flower wrought patiently in the snowy lawn, unfolds its bosom : buds and leaves and sprigs and curling tendrils, gracefully disposed, follow the nimble finger of the fair ;” who loves not evening thus !— Away, away from the dizzy Babel, embosomed in peace and quietude.

Fast falls the snow, but with comforts such as these, Winter, we dread thee not ; nay we “ crown thee king of intimate delights, fire-side enjoyments, homeborn happiness and all the comforts, that the lowly roof of undisturbed retirement, and the hours of long uninterrupted evening, know.” Fast falls the snow without ; the fields lie hid, the thatched cottages are covered with the hoary flakes. Stir the fire, draw nearer to the blazing hearth and think of those journeying homewards through such a night. “ How calm is our recess ; and how the frost raging abroad, and the rough wind endear the silence and the warmth enjoyed within !”

How delicious in such peaceful moments to take up Cowper and dream over his exquisite poems. To us it is the most delightful of treats ; and while the snow falls thickly on the hills and valleys, and

drives down on the slow moving wain, let us read some of the most striking portions of his writings. Nothing can so endear this fire-side to one's heart, purifying all the affections of the soul and shedding quietude and happiness on this tree-embosomed home.

We have ever loved the life of this sainted-man. It abounds in so much that is pure, simple and artless. Humanity may shed its finest expression of admiration here. There is so much that is noble, mingled with so much that is gentle. There is such a hallowed charm thrown around all that comes in the way of this holiest and best of poets. No one can rise from a perusal of his works without better thoughts and better feelings. He is like a fountain of crystal water ; a crystal fountain, pouring forth the most limpid streams.

From his very birth we love him : and who is there that does not thus love him after reading those exquisite lines on the receipt of his mother's picture ? What heart melts not while listening to the thrilling strain ? And then how sweetly he lets us into all the domestic blessings of his, oftentimes, happy lot. Those letters of his are beyond praise. No letters are equal to them in the language for warmth, elegance and purity. One becomes almost an inmate of his home ; a beloved companion of the poet's. Sad indeed were those clouds that obscured his mental vision ; sad and gloomy. But he had much exquisite blessedness. Comparing him with others renowned in song, he would suffer

little ; indeed we doubt not but that he would be found to have enjoyed, upon the whole, a greater portion of comfort and happiness.

These letters of his will always live ; indeed we know not which to prefer, his letters or his poems. We love both too well to part with either. Perhaps they are equally as interesting as Boswell's Johnson ; to the child of God, infinitely more so.

How endeared those names are to us which his affectionate and sympathising friends bore ! We can never forget his Mary, Lady Austin, Lady Hesketh, Hayley, Joseph Hill and others. They are enshrined amid our sweetest and our holiest memories. And how beautiful the concluding couplet of his epistle to Joseph Hill, so exquisitely turned :—

But not to moralize too much, and strain,
To prove an evil, of which all complain,
(I hate long arguments verbosely spun)
One story more, dear Hill, and I have done.
Once on a time an emperor, a wise man,
No matter where, in China, or Japan,
Decreed, that whosoever should offend
Against the well-known duties of a friend,
Convicted once should ever after wear
But half a coat, and show his bosom bare.
The punishment importing this, no doubt,
That all was naught within, and all found out.

O happy Britain ! we have not to fear
Such hard and arbitrary measure here ;
Else, could a law, like that which I relate,
Once have the sanction of our triple state,
Some few, that I have known in days of old,
Would run most dreadful risk of catching cold ;
While you, my friend, whatever wind should blow,
Might traverse England safely to and fro,

An honest man, close buttoned to the chin,
Broad-cloth without and a warm heart within.

We are reading this from the edition printed but a few years after the poet's death ; and we confess we feel a peculiar pleasure in handling a book bearing the date 1808 and the name of Johnson ; all will remember his letters to the printer, so characteristic of the pure and unsophisticated Cowper. There is a dreamy feeling in knowing that these volumes appeared almost in the very life-time of their author ; perhaps purchased by one of his friends.

And who would not dream in such a quiet home, the fire blazing brightly and casting its warmth and light on the pictures, books and busts, the carpet and sweetly adorned tea-table on which a few modest snow-drops stand, emblems of perfect beauty and perfect purity ; then the white fields lying all round the cottage-habitation, and the snow falling fast and faster, the winds blowing bleak and wintry. We cannot but dream in such a calm, quiet, blessed home ; cannot otherwise than turn page after page of our author in a desultory manner. Some of our readers, at least, will enter into all these peaceful feelings. They will remember times when they too have been lulled into the serene haven of silent happiness ; they will understand us.

There is another and not less exquisite piece of Cowper's on the hateful practice of swearing ; and will not be out of place as a further specimen of the chasteness of his wit :—

A Persian, humble servant of the sun,
 Who though devout yet bigotry had none,
 Hearing a lawyer, grave in his address,
 With adjurations every word impress,
 Supposed the man a bishop, or at least,
 God's name so much upon his lips, a priest ;
 Bowed at the close with all his graceful airs,
 And begged an interest in his frequent prayers.

His letters are even more enlivened with it than his poems. Those to Lady Hesketh and Joseph Hill contain many sparkling specimens. Indeed, when rebuking, he is often playful ; he rather seeks to exhibit the absurdity of the thing by some pleasing allusion, than to censure it with sternness. This characteristic will be perceived at once by those who have read and admired his writings.

But let us turn to more serious passages : passages breathing more of the deep throbbing feelings of humanity than its playfulness and love. In listening to their noble music we would let the evening hour flow quietly away. Let the snow continue falling and the wind blow bleak and chilly, we are happy here and blessed. Then ply the needle while we read : yet we would linger a little over those sweeter melodies which breathe out the sorrows of his heart : full of tenderest expression are these :—

No wounds like those a wounded spirit feels ;
 No cure for such, till God, who makes them, heals.
 And thou, sad sufferer, under nameless ill,
 That yields not to the touch of human skill,
 Improve the kind occasion, understand
 A Father's frown and kiss the chastening rod !

This is a sight for pity to peruse,
 Till she resembles, faintly, what she views ;

Till sympathy contracts a kindred pain,
 Pierced with the woes that she laments in vain.
 This, of all maladies that man infest,
 Claims most compassion, and receives the less.

But with a soul that ever felt the sting
 Of sorrow, sorrow is a sacred thing.

'Tis not, as heads that never ache suppose,
 Forgery of fancy, and a dream of woes.
 Man is a harp, whose chords elude the sight,
 Each yielding harmony, disposed aright;
 The screws reversed (a task, which, if he please,
 God in a moment executes with ease;)
 Ten thousand, thousand strings at once go loose:
 Lost, till He tune them, all their power and use.

But far more touchingly beautiful than all, are those lines in which he refers to "One who had himself been hurt by archers;" it is so simple, so pure, so thrilling :—

I was a stricken deer, that left the herd
 Long since. With many an arrow deep infixed
 My panting side was charged, when I withdrew
 To seek a tranquil death in distant shades.
 There was I found by One, who had himself
 Been hurt by archers. In his side he bore,
 And in his hands and feet, the cruel scars.
 With gentle force soliciting the darts,
 He drew them forth, and healed, and bade me live.

A note struck upon the soul never to be forgotten ! Its exquisite sweetness curls around the heart and lives, entwined, for years. There is such a meek-breathing tone, so applicable to the subject ; and the allusion is like the mild light of heaven throwing additional beauty over one of the most touching pictures in our language. It radiates with a calm spiritual lustre soothing to the very exis-

tence. Gently does he recall his sorrow, yea with all the gentleness of a child of God, and gently does it find its way to our bosom.

How fine is Cowper's reply to the sage who desires him to leave the world alone to babble on in its foolish hopes and fears. It is a noble passage; breathing from the inner depths of universal brotherhood. It is the utterance of the bursting soul of one who loved humanity with his very life:—

'Twere well, says one sage erudite, profound,
Terribly arched and aquiline his nose,
And overbuilt with most impending brows,
'Twere well, could you permit the world to live
As the world pleases. What's the world to you?
Much. I was born of woman, and drew milk
As sweet as charity from human breasts.
I think, articulate, I laugh and weep,
And exercise all functions of a man.
How then should I and any man that lives
Be strangers to each other? Pierce my vein,
Take of the crimson stream meandering there,
And catechise it well; apply thy glass,
Search it, and prove now if it be not blood
Congenial with thine own: and, if it be,
What edge of subtlety canst thou suppose
Keen enough, wise and skilful as thou art,
To cut the link of brotherhood, by which
One common Maker bound me to the kind?
True; I am no proficient, I confess,
In arts like yours. I cannot call the swift
And perilous lightnings from the angry clouds,
And bid them hide themselves in earth beneath;
I cannot analyse the air nor catch
The parallax of yonder luminous point,
That seems half quenched in the immense abyss;
Such powers I boast not—neither can I rest
A silent witness of the headlong rage,

Or heedless folly, by which thousands die,
Bone of my bone, and kindred souls to mine.

And again in that often quoted contrast between the simple peasant and the witty Voltaire, what mild lustre glows in every line :—

Yon cottager, who weaves at her own door,
Pillow and bobbins all her little store ;
Content tho' mean, and cheerful if not gay,
Shuffling her threads about the livelong day,
Just earns a scanty pittance, and at night
Lies down secure, her heart and pocket light ;
She, for her humble sphere by nature fit,
Has little understanding and no wit,
Receives no praise ; but, though her lot be such,
(Toilsome and indigent) she renders much ;
That knows, and knows no more, her Bible true—
A truth the brilliant Frenchman never knew ;
And in that charter reads with sparkling eyes
Her title to a treasure in the skies.

O happy peasant ! O unhappy bard !
His the mere tinsel, her's the rich reward ;
He praised perhaps for ages yet to come,
She never heard of half a mile from home :
He lost in errors his vain heart prefers,
She safe in the simplicity of her's.

How fine is that deep thrilling utterance of the wearied soul in the opening of the second book of the Task :—

O for a lodge in some vast wilderness,
Some boundless contiguity of shade,
Where rumour of oppression and deceit,
Of unsuccessful or successful war
Might never reach me more.

What quiet sweetness, soft as the mellowed light of eve, characterizes the walk to Emmaus ; what

solemn eloquence breathes in his denunciation of unholy ministers, and how lofty and even magnificent are those anathemas against slavery and wrong. But where all is so beautiful, so manly and so gentle, how shall we choose? We love his colloquial style; his pure and christian flow of reasoning. Indeed his works abound in these; they are imbued with all the silent happiness of home. They could not otherwise than have been written in a blessed abode. Had Cowper been differently placed he never had composed such charming volumes. We could fancy ten thousand circumstances that would have blighted all.

He is a poet of whom one never wearies. However we may love others, still we are not always in the mood to enjoy them. To read them, they require you to bring the mind attuned to their music, whether it be swelling out with grandeur or flowing softly and dreamlike. But to Cowper you may ever give "capable ear." Times and seasons heed not: you will find pleasure and profit: your heart will be purified; evil passions will be subdued, evil desires overcome; there will be a holy and blessed influence at work directly you turn his page. This hallowing power will harmonize your mind to its unsullied sanctity of purpose and will.

He is as a revered parent talking with you, his child. His hair is grey; and his aspect venerable, yet beaming with the tenderest affection; and you listen to the charmed notes with deepening joy. He is the most intimate companion and yet the holiest guide. You cannot otherwise than reverence him;

and feel that he talks with you as one who knows every expression of your soul. He leads you through nature and tells of Him, its author. He leads you home and tells of domestic blessedness independent of the world's smile or frown. He leads you to the universal Father and shews Him once again reconciled to you by His divine Son.

Cast down and wounded art thou, he will soothe and comfort: weak and helpless—he will give strength and hope: harassed with unholy desires and wishes, he will purify and subdue; loving wife and child, he will deepen that hallowed love; clinging to parents, he will make thee cling more tenderly; happy, he will make thee happier. Be his companion for a morning; a winter's clear and frosty morning, and thy soul shall be gladdened by his converse and his smile. He will shew "the self-sequestered man fresh for his task, intend what task he may." He will tell thee that "inclement seasons recommend his warm but simple home, when he enjoys with her, who shares his pleasures and his heart, sweet converse." He will make thee feel the healthy happiness of the morning meal when partaken with those we love. Then thou wilt wander forth with him into the garden; and though flowers now bloom not, still wilt thou find the most beautiful of all rearing its unsullied petals, even the sweet hope-breathing snow-drop: and thou wilt find the air bracing though keen, and the sky all cloudless blue; and from this plot of cultivated ground will he lead thee into the fields. Then after the sweetest words that ever fell

from mortal lips, the day will reach its meridian, and the bells from yonder village church will break out, and the poet's soul will burst with thrilling memories :—

There is in souls a sympathy with sounds,
And as the mind is pitched the ear is pleased
With melting airs or martial, brisk or grave ;
Some chord in unison with what we hear
Is touched within us, and the heart replies.
How soft the music of those village bells,
Falling at intervals upon the ear
In cadence sweet, now dying all away,
Now pealing loud again, and louder still,
Clear and sonorous, as the gale comes on !
With easy force it opens all the cells
Where Memory slept. Wherever I have heard
A kindred melody, the scene recurs,
And with it all its pleasures and its pains.
Such comprehensive views the spirit takes,
That in a few short moments I retrace
(As in a map the voyager his course)
The windings of my way through many years.

And pursuing this he will tell thee of a father and a mother, and of their inestimable worth ; but the chimes swelling out again in simple music will recall his thoughts :—

Again the harmony comes o'er the vale :
And through the trees I view the embattled tower,
Whence all the music. I again perceive
The soothing influence of the wafted strains,
And settle in soft musings as I tread
The walk, still verdant, under oaks and elms,
Whose outspread branches overarch the glade.

And then he will return with thee to his quiet and happy home, and the day thou spendest with him will be hallowed indeed.

Thus we have let our feelings flow while lingering over the pages of this sainted bard. Fast falls the snow without and faster still; but warmer comfort and higher bliss have been tasted within. The lamp sheds a more mellowed lustre; the fire blazes more tranquilly; even the busts, pictures, and books have a deeper look of quietude. Peace broods over our home; blessedness pervades our heart. Now and then the wind blows; but it enhances the comforts of our hearth. We lay aside the book, loving and clinging to our poet more than heretofore. He has added to our delights; he has enhanced our purest joys.

So closes the volume one evening in our quiet home; a home secluded from the world and far off from the noise of busy London; a home blessed with peace and tenderness and the smile of God: closed indeed but to be opened in other calm and holy hours. Wintry indeed without and white with cold; but here, within, all hallowed joy; unruffled and undisturbed.

GEORGE CROLY.

THE genius of this poet is of the boldest and most splendid character ; he displays in all his writings, the most trifling not excepted, a profusion of intellectual wealth. Brought up and nurtured amid wild hill-scenery, his mind naturally partakes of its grandeur and sublimity ; and even his vast oriental researches and predilections have not entirely subdued the ruggedness of his conceptions. Eastern luxuriance and voluptuousness have not wholly taken possession of his soul ; there still remains the fresh, free, vigorous strength of the mountaineer.

His poems will never become popular ; they are too gorgeous and magnificent for the multitude ; they pall upon the taste ; the mind is not ever in a mood to enjoy their dazzling splendour ; it cannot always be on the stretch ; it seeks for simpler and sweeter strains. The wild blast of the hurricane, the startling flash of the lightning, the tremendous roll of thunders, the bellowings of ocean, do not always please ; they elevate, indeed, the thoughts, but they soon weary the senses ; they expand and dilate the being ; the imagination is fired ; we admire the terrible confusion, and even love for awhile the loud crashings of the storm, but we

soon turn with joy to the softer features of an evening landscape beneath an Italian sky ; and as the traveller, in the midst of the sublime scenery of the North Cape, with an eye fully capable of taking in all its grandeur and glory, often casts his spirit back to those less rugged and more lovely spots of his own beautiful isle, so do we turn from the more brilliant gushes of minstrelsy to the chaster and humbler music of the heart with a feeling of delight and rapture.

The love of grandeur and magnificence is the ruling passion of our poet, and is discoverable in every production of his lyre ; and it is to this very characteristic that they will owe their unpopularity ; they will never move the people ; they will never enchain the mind of the nation ; their rich, powerful music will fall unheeded. To gain their ear and heart it wants something more lively and simple ; sweetness is the charm that wins them. This is not only true with the writings of poet and of orator, but it is also true with regard to painters. It is not the sublime sketch of the Last Judgment that enchanteth, but the humbler drawing of some rural festival : beauty, and not splendour, is the idol. There is, however, no question as to which is higher in the scale of intellectual greatness ; the tremendous conception of the future desolation requires a stronger and a loftier stretch of mind than some picture of village life ; and it needs a greater bard to sweep the deep chords of eternity than the trembling strings of earthly sweets. And yet the latter shall be the favourite with the many ; and,

indeed, this may be seen in the case of Milton and Cowper; for although the former is so much applauded, and that, too, deservedly, yet we doubt if he is as much read as the sainted bard of Olney.

Had our author been less gifted, he would doubtless have had more numerous admirers; there is too much splendour for the populace; had he less, he would have been better known. He indeed works powerfully on a few master-minds; to them he gives new impulses; but with the multitude, he, as it were, has no existence; the names and songs of his humbler brethren are in every one's mouth—they are household words.

Paris in 1815 is Croly's principal poem: it has more of the solemn and stately grandeur than the gorgeous; there is a lofty tone running through the whole. His cities are marble; his people, moving statues. It is prefaced by a splendid dissertation on the French revolution in perfect accordance with what follows. How characteristic of its author is the following description of the worship in Notre Dame: and then the reference to the simpler service of the village churches of England:—

The organ peals; at once, as some vast wave,
Bend to the earth the mighty multitude,
Silent as those pale emblems of the grave
In monumental marble round them strewed,
Low at the altar, forms in cope and hood
Superb with gold-wrought cross and diamond twine,
Life in their upturned visages subdued,
Toss their untiring censers round the shrine,
Where on her throne of clouds the Virgin sits divine.

But only kindred faith can fitly tell
 Of the high ritual at that altar done,
 When clashed the arms, and rose the chorus-swell,
 Then sank, as if beneath the grave 'twere gone ;
 Till broke the spell the mitred abbot's tone,
 Deep, touching, solemn, as he stood in prayer,
 A dazzling form upon its topmost stone,
 And raised, with hallowed look, the Host in air, [there.
 And blessed with heavenward hand the thousands kneeling

Pompous ! but love I not such pomp of prayer ;
 Ill bends the heart 'mid mortal luxury.
 Rather let me the meek devotion share,
 Where, in their silent glens and thickets high,
 England, thy lone and lowly chapels lie.
 The spotless table by the eastern wall,
 The marble, rudely traced with names gone by,
 The pale-eyed pastor's simple, fervent call ;
 Those deeper wake the heart, where heart is all in all.

If pride be evil ; if the holiest sighs
 Must come from humblest hearts ; if man must turn
 Full on his wreck of nature to be wise ;
 If there be blessedness for those who mourn ;
 What speak the purple gauds that round us burn ?
 Ask of that kneeling crowd whose glances stray
 So restless round on altar, vestment, urn ;
 Can guilt weep there ? can mild repentance pray ?
 Ask, when this moment's past, how runs their Sabbath-day !

Their Sabbath-day ! alas ! to France that day
 Comes not ; she has a day of looser dress,
 A day of thicker crowded ball and play,
 A day of folly's hotter, ranker press ;
 She knoweth not its hallowed happiness,
 Its eve of gathered hearts and gentle cheer.

Throughout the whole of this there is dignity : it is deeply coloured with the stateliness of his own mind. There is not a line which is not full and sonorous, we had almost said pompous. Even when the poet alludes to the religious peasantry of

England, their fervid aspirations after the pure and holy, their simple but heart-breathing services, their sigh of deep contrition, their plea for pardon, their entire reliance on Jesus, their spiritual hymns, we have the same majestic roll of music ; there is little or no diminution in its solemn movement ; there is no sweet, low pause ; no gentle hush. The gorgeous ceremonies of the apostate church are more in accordance with his muse than the simpler ritual of our own. And even here he is not so much at home as in pictures of sullen grandeur. His best poems remind one of the setting of the sun amid a brooding storm ; the cry of the sea-gull, the dark clouds, ever and anon a streak of bluish white, the crimson and the gold in the western sky, the tempestuous breeze, the lashing of the waters, often combine to form a scene of wild and strange magnificence strikingly characteristic of our author.

Perhaps the first of the following pieces is as free from this stately music as any ; but the second exhibits it in a high degree. They are both on Evening : the one displaying its sweet, unruffled quietude ; the other, its sullen and tempestuous glory :—

Look on these waters, with how soft a kiss
They woo the pebbled shore ! then steal away,
Like wanton lovers,—but to come again,
And die in music ! There, the bending skies
See all their stars,—and the beach-loving trees,
Oziers and willows, and the watery flowers,
That wreath their pale roots round the ancient stones,
Make pictures of themselves !

There is a gloomy grandeur in the sun,
That levels his last light along the shore ;
The clouds are rolling downwards, stern and dun ;
The long, slow wave is streaked with red, like gore
On some vast field of battle ; and the roar
Of wave and wind comes like the battle's sound.
And now the sun sinks deeper : and the clouds,
In folds of sullen fire, still heavier lower :
'Till the whole storm the shore and ocean shrouds.

Croly's Sebastian is a fine Spanish romance, well told, though often negligent in the construction of its verse ; it abounds with splendid passages ; perhaps the one on the Alhambra is the most gorgeous. Much of his poetry, however, is descriptive of the beauty and glory of the East ; in it we discover the wonderful resources of his mind. He has woven the high-wrought superstitions of Araby and its adjacent countries into a woof of magnificent texture.

It is not unfrequently pleasant to read the tales that abound in eastern lands ; they may be very improbable, but they are not on that account the less beautiful. Besides angels, the Mahometans believe in a race of beings which form, as it were, a link between man and the celestial spirits, composed of soul and body, but higher and more ethereal. Many are the exquisite stories we have concerning these ; and we cannot but admire them when they come to us clothed in all the softness and voluptuousness of the East. They scent of the odoriferous spices of Arabia. We delight in reading of their magnificent palaces, their flowery gardens, their cooling streams, their million fountains, their myriad gems, their wide outspread heavens,

their citron and their olive groves, their stately temples, their faithful and constant loves. How often did we listen to these marvellous stories in our childhood ! and in our later years they have not completely left us ; something of their fragrance remains.

We cannot think even of the orient clime without the imagination being somewhat tinged with its fair beauty. "The gold of that land is good." But to nothing do we turn with greater delight than to its traditions respecting the angels : one of these our poet has chosen as a fitting theme of his lyre. It is related in the Koran that two angels, Haruth and Maruth, having spoken in contemptuous tones of man's weakness in resisting temptation, were sent down to earth that their own firmness and purity might be tested. They surmount every trial, and are about to re-ascend to their blissful abode, when a woman, whose form a spirit has assumed, plies her wiles to seduce : she fails, until she persuades them to taste the wine-cup, when she completely triumphs ; and in their folly, they reveal the words by which men are elevated to angels. The punishment quickly follows, and they are for ever exiled from heaven.

Our poet makes a little alteration. Instead of two spirits, he narrates the overthrow of one : the tale is thereby simplified and the interest increased. He also mitigates the severe judgment, and the angel is partly forgiven. The poem is literally crowded with diamonds, pearls and amethysts, rubies and sapphires, roses, lilies and amaranths,

palms and cedars, frankincense and myrrh, cloudless skies and balmy evenings, gentle music and tones of deepest tenderness. We deem it the most magnificent of his productions.

The Angel of the world was seated on a lofty tower near Damascus ; the time of his departure was at hand ; temptations had assailed in vain ; his faith was still pure ; his holiness stood vouch'd ; it shone brighter for the trial ; he felt joyous in conscious innocence ; he looked forward to the garden-land of Paradise ; his triumph was at hand ; he had undergone the fiery ordeal, and he had come out a gem of more brilliant lustre ; his former boastful words were nearly accomplished, his vaunt nearly fulfilled. But one other test awaited him :—

The sun was slowly sinking to the west,
Pavilioned with a thousand glorious dyes ;
The turtle-doves were winging to the nest
Along the mountain's soft declivities ;
The fresher breath of flowers began to rise,
Like incense, to that sweet departing sun ;
Faint as the hum of bees the city's cries :
A moment, and the lingering disk was gone ;
Then were the angel's task on earth's dim orbit done.

Oft had he gazed upon that lovely vale,
But never gazed with gladness such as now ;
When on Damascus' roofs and turrets pale
He saw the solemn sunlight's fainter glow,
With joy he heard the Imauns' voices flow
Like breath of silver trumpets on the air ;
The vintagers' sweet song, the camels' low,
As home they stalked from pasture, pair by pair,
Flinging their shadows tall in the deep sunset glare.

Then at his sceptre's wave, a rush of plumes
Shook the thick dew-drops from the roses' dyes ;

And, as embodying of their waked perfumes,
 A crowd of lovely forms, with lightning eyes,
 And flower-crowned hair, and cheeks of paradise,
 Circled the bower of beauty on the wing ;
 And all the grove was rich with symphonies
 Of seeming flute, and horn, and golden string,
 That slowly rose, and o'er the mount hung hovering.

The angel's glance was thrown upwards to the blue vault ; his wings expanded ; already his flight was begun. He turned his countenance on the plain beneath, and there was a suppliant on her knees. Wrath darkened his fair, bright face, but it soon regained its sunny radiance. She stated her petition : she had vowed to close her dying parent's eyes, and on the way, the caravan was stopped, and her little wealth made the prize of the robbers : he cast a priceless gem to the lowly pilgrim, and prepared again for his return. She still knelt ; he bade her "be happy, and begone :" —

The weeper raised the veil ; a ruby lip
 First dawned : then glowed the young cheek's deeper hue,
 Yet delicate as roses when they dip
 Their odorous blossoms in the morning dew :
 Then beamed the eyes, twin stars of living blue ;
 Half shaded by the curls of glossy hair,
 That turned to golden as the light wind threw
 Their clusters in the western golden glare.
 Yet was her blue eye dim, for tears were standing there.

The angel gazed upon the lovely one, and she deeply blushed, and stooping, plucked a flower, and laid it on the footstool of the throne. "Her sighs were richer than the rose they fanned." By command he could not accept the gift without staining the purity of his judgment-seat ; it lay

untouched. The pilgrim cast upwards an upbraiding glance ; a dizziness came ; his spirit was enwrapt in a dream of forgetfulness ; yet still he heard the voice of the suppliant sweeter than the sweetest melody.

Consciousness returned : he touched the beautiful offering, and bade farewell. In a moment, deep thunders rolled and crashed ; a mist gathered in the vale, and enveloped the mountain ; the storm raged, the dim vapours seemed as many waters ; a ship heaved on the dashing waves ; its sail was silken, and its guide a lovely woman : suddenly it plunged beneath the roaring billows, and the tempest ceased. The angel knew the symbol, but still gazed on the fatal flower, and the pilgrim, with her “ small, unsandaled feet, shining like silver on a floor of rose :”—

A simple Syrian lyre was on her breast,
And on her crimson lip was murmuring
A village strain, that in the day's sweet rest
Is heard in Araby, round many a spring,
When down the twilight vales the maidens bring
The flocks to some old patriarchal well ;
Or where, beneath the palms, some desert king
Lies, with his tribe around him as they fell !
The thunder burst again, a long, deep, crashing peal.

The angel heard not :—

He heard not even the strain, though it had changed
From the calm sweetness of the holy hymn :
His thoughts from depth to depth unconscious ranged,
Yet all within was dizzy, strange, and dim :
A mist seemed spreading between heaven and him ;
He sat absorbed in dreams—a searching tone
Came on his ear ; oh how her dark eyes swim

Who breathed that echo to a heart undone,
The song of early joys, delicious, dear, and gone !

Again it changed : but now 'twas wild and grand—
The praise of hearts that scorn the world's control,
Disdaining all but Love's delicious band,
The chain of gold and flowers, the tie of soul !
Again strange paleness o'er her beauty stole ;
She glanced above, then stooped her glowing eye,
Blue as the star that glittered by the pole ;
One tear-drop gleamed, she dashed it quickly by,
And dropped the lyre, and turned—as if she turned to die.

The night-breeze swept up the mountain's side ;
the clouds in the western heaven seemed as some
huge palace lighted up with golden sunbeams and
amethystine tints. The angel had lost his eye for
grandeur ; his heart was with the being that so
sweetly kneeled at his feet. Would the flowery
clime be happiness without her ?—would earth not
be paradise with her ?—were thoughts that dis-
turbed the settled rest of his soul. A storm again
arose, and the whirlwind dashed out its gloomy
sounds ; the fair moon waned, and the stars lost
their brightness.

The angel sat enthroned within a dome
Of alabaster, raised on pillars slight,
Curtained with tissues of no earthly loom ;
For spirits wove the web of blossoms bright,
Woof of all flowers that drink the morning light,
And with their beauty figured all the stone
In characters of mystery and might,
A more than mortal guard around the throne,
That in their tender shade one glorious diamond shone.

And every bud round pedestal and plinth,
As fell the evening, turned a living gem,
Lighted its purple lamp the hyacinth,
The dahlia poured its thousand-coloured gleam,

A ruby torch the wondering eye might deem
Hung on the brow of some night-watching tower,
Where upwards climbed the broad magnolia's stem—
An urn of lovely lustre every flower,
Burning before the king of that illumined bower.

And nestling in that arbour's leafy twine,
From cedar's top to violet's lowly bell,
Were birds, now hushed, of plumage all divine,
That as the quivering radiance on them fell,
Shot back such hues as stain the orient shell,
Touching the deep, green shades with light from eyes
Jacinth, and jet, and blazing carbuncle,
And gold-dropt coronets, and wings of dyes
Bathed in the living streams of their own paradise.

The angel heeded not the warning, the deep witchery of the suppliant spell-bound him ; night's gloomy shadows had fallen on hill, and plain, and proud Damascus ; there was no stir in the city ; the maiden's foot had ceased to tread her streets, and the voice of song had died away ; the poor man alike with the rich slept soundly, and forgot his troubles, or perhaps in fairy dream beheld some beautiful home, with its wide-extended garden, his own ; darkness was in the horizon, but celestial light was in the bower ; the expression of the pilgrim's eye became loftier, but not less sweet. She rose, and with one arm pointing to the sky, approached him nearer ; then plucking "a cluster from the vine" which threw its light, transparent leaves around. beneath the golden radiance, she pressed its juice into a crystal chalice, and offered it to the angel. His countenance darted fire, and she tottered as if wounded to the heart ; he sprang forwards, and caught her in his arms, and drank

the contents of the cup, which she still had strength to offer ; once more she fixed on his bending form “ the beam of her deep, dewy, melancholy eye.” Another warning was given—they stood as if sadness had taken possession of their souls ; the angel felt his guilt ; but she, “ in a voice as sweet as the murmuring of summer streams beneath the moonlight’s glance,” besought him to reveal the unknown words. Her delicious beguilements prevailed, and he uttered the sentence ; the heavens resounded with hollow thunders, and the clouds gave forth the lightnings ; the rain dashed downwards to the earth, and the plain and the mountain smoked beneath the terrible storm.

The seducer proves to be Eblis, who having re-assumed his shape, pronounces the angel’s doom—to remain on earth until it is once again covered with the innocence and pristine beauty of paradise and the peaceful loveliness of its birth hour.

We think this is the most exquisite Arabian fiction we have ever read : it is sweetly sung ; and of all songs bearing an Oriental origin and cast, we deem this one of the finest. There are several other poems which are distinguished as having issued from the same source ; and we cannot leave the odoriferous ground of the East without quoting our author’s lines on the Dream of Jacob. We cannot forget, too, that the events which interested and delighted us most in childhood were witnessed by an Asiatic sky ; the touching histories of the Bible belong to these lands—with them they are for ever associated ; and one of the most thrilling

of these is the account of Jacob. Sent out at an early age, friendless and alone, with nothing but the blessing of his father, he toiled onwards towards the home of his uncle Laban ; the twilight was deepening into night, and the heaven sending out her myriad stars, when he took a stone, and placing it as a pillow, laid himself down to rest :—

The sun was sinking on the mountain-zone
 That guards thy vales of beauty, Palestine !
 And lovely from the desert rose the moon,
 Yet lingering on the horizon's purple line,
 Like a pure spirit o'er its earthly shrine.
 Up Padan-aram's height, abrupt and bare,
 A pilgrim toiled, and oft on day's decline
 Looked pale, then paused for eve's delicious air ; [prayer.
 The summit gained, he knelt and breathed his evening

He spread his cloak and slumbered—darkness fell
 Upon the twilight hills ; a sudden sound
 Of silver trumpets o'er him seemed to swell ;
 Clouds heavy with the tempest gathered round,
 Yet was the whirlwind in its caverns bound ;
 Still deeper rolled the darkness from on high,
 Gigantic volume upon volume wound—
 Above, a pillar shooting to the sky :
 Below, a mighty sea, that spreads incessantly.

Voice are heard—a choir of golden strings ;
 Low winds, whose breath is loaded with the rose ;
 Then chariot-wheels—the nearer rush of wings ;
 Pale lightning round the dark pavilion glows :
 It thunders—the resplendent gates unclose.
 Far as the eye can glance, on height o'er height
 Rise fiery waving wings, and star-crowned brows,
 Millions on millions, brighter and more bright,
 Till all is lost in one supreme, unmixed light.

But, two beside the sleeping pilgrim stand,
 Like cherub-kings, with lifted, mighty plume,
 Fixed, sun-bright eyes, and looks of high command :

They tell the patriarch of his glorious doom ;
Father of countless myriads that shall come,
Sweeping the land like billows of the sea,
Bright as the stars of heaven from twilight's gloom,
Till He is given whom angels long to see,
And Israel's splendid line is crowned with Deity.

Such is the vision that appeared to the weary pilgrim. He arose in the morning, and raised a monument with the stone, in commemoration of the event, and vowed that if he returned to his home again in peace, the Lord should be his God. He still toiled onwards, but doubtless with a lighter heart. Before his dream, his mind would naturally be sad ; it would often recur to the past ; the retreat of infancy would exert a powerful influence in deepening that melancholy ; the fear of his incensed brother would press upon him ; and as he turned around upon the setting glories of the first day, he would be absorbed by pensive reflections : he was homeless—he was houseless. But now he could go on his way rejoicing ; the star of hope had beamed ; the Deity had appeared ; his gloom would be exchanged for a delightful anticipation ; and in the magnificence of the Eternal's promise, he would almost forget his former fears and sorrows, and even the face of those he loved.

He arrived at Laban's. "and he looked, and behold a well in the field, and lo, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it ; for out of that well they watered the flocks : and a great stone was upon the well's mouth. And thither were all the flocks gathered : and they rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the sheep, and put the

stone again upon the well's mouth in his place. And Jacob said unto them, My brethren, whence be ye? And they said, Of Haran are we. And he said unto them, Know ye Laban the son of Nahor? And they said, We know him. And he said unto them, Is he well? And they said, He is well: and behold Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep. And he said, Lo, it is high day, neither is it time that the cattle should be gathered together: water ye the sheep, and go and feed them. And they said, We cannot, until all the flocks be gathered together, and till they roll the stone from the well's mouth; then we water the sheep. And while he yet spake with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep: for she kept them. And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban, his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, that Jacob went near, and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother. And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice and wept. And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's brother, and that he was Rebekah's son: and she ran and told her father. And it came to pass, when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob his sister's son, that he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and he brought him to his house. And he told Laban all these things."

How beautiful is his love for Rachel; pure and spotless as anything on earth. The man is under the smile of heaven: he daily increases in wealth, and in a few years becomes a powerful prince. We

pass over the interesting and touching records of his life: his wrestling with the angel at Peniel, and refusing to let him go until blessed, his meeting with his brother Esau, his establishment in the land of Canaan, his love of Joseph, all these beautiful records belong to the East. They are entwined around its dells and plains, mountains and streams. Well may we love the oriental region; well may it kindle all our enthusiasm, and all our hopes; much of its ground is sacred; it teems with hallowed associations; and on its soil the Incarnate trod, preaching "liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those that are bound."

THOMAS DAVIS.

IN a world of bustle and anxiety, it is sweet and refreshing to hear, ever and anon, the song of peace and the hymn of faith ; they cheer and exalt the depressed spirit ; they gladden and raise the sorrowful heart.

Songs from the Parsonage—the very name is charming. To us it is associated with the following scene, wherein reality is blended with imagination. The shadows of night were fast hastening down, when we stood gazing on the ancient church of Gawsworth and its burial-ground : it rose upon a gentle slope, while a row of fine lofty elms formed a suitable background ; the rooks cawed, the winds moaned through the luxuriant foliage ; all else was silent. Opposite these stood the pretty Rectory, enshrouded by a clump or two of dark firs ; its jet-black timbers on a ground of purest white, its green ivy mantling the walls, its crimson roses, its starry clematis, its struggling woodbine, its old-fashioned windows, formed one of the sweetest homes we ever saw. Between the Parsonage and the Church were four large fish-ponds, on whose sides grew some noble sycamores. It was like the creation of some poet's fancy ; the domestic retreat

of his love-lit imagination ; it was the realization of some dream : on tree and flower, house and church there was a calm unruffled quietude. The shades deepened and deepened ; the beautiful scene became every moment more indistinct ; the solitude and the loneliness increased ; every object sank away in the darkness ; the winds dropped, the cawing of the rooks ceased : suddenly the moon peered above the horizon, and oh ! how exquisitely serene were all things ; "no stir of air was there, not so much life as on a summer's day robs one light seed from the feathered grass." The tower, the roof of the cottage, the tree-tops were silvered by her radiance. We stood and gazed ; how strikingly still ! But a sound arose ; it was a holy hymn ; it seemed the divinest music, and our eyes were filled with tears as it brought to our mind the hallowed eventides of our own hearth and our own beloved ones.

The poems are in perfect keeping with their title, and are worthy of a minister of the apostolic English church : they are somewhat similar to the beautiful strains of the good George Herbert. The versification is correct, and often elegant.

How full of confiding trust is this :—

Oh ! how profoundly tranquil is the peace
Of him whose mind, my God, is stayed on thee !
The storm may come, and earthly hopes may cease,
And all that once was full of joy, may be
Lost and for ever ; but while he may see
Thine arm directing, let the storm beat on ;
It will not pass unheeded : but shall he
Tremble and murmur, upon whom hath shone,

From the glad Sun of Righteousness, a ray
 Showing the pathway to a home above,
 Where that same hand ere long shall wipe away
 His every tear, which now doth smite in love?
 No : from his heart he prays, Thy will be done,
 And even in grief can feel, Thy will and his are one.

And this, suggested by a vase of flowers, is not less beautiful :—

How fair must be the flowers of Paradise,
 Earth's to surpass in beauty ! With what skill
 Must heaven have formed and blent their wondrous dyes,
 When upon these the eye can gaze until
 All is a dream of loveliness ; and still
 With every closer gaze new beauties rise,
 Anew to please, to charm, and with surprise,
 Devout as deep, to animate and fill !
 Oh ! for a seraph's wings to flee away !
 To mount and bathe in beauty and in love—
 Love as it glows beneath a heavenly ray,
 And beauty as it blooms in climes above :
 To dwell where God, that decks the earth with flowers,
 Himself for ever dwells amid celestial bowers.

With this the mind sympathizes : for who has not stood in calm, deep thought before these stars of earth, and mused on Paradise, its blushing flowers, its enchanting sweetness, its perfect stillness, its tall, majestic cedars, its lofty pines, its clear waters, its blissful pair ? Scenes of Eden's unruffled peace have broken in upon us, and we have gazed delighted on its orient mornings and its dewy evenings ; its gales have wafted to the sense the odoriferous perfume of its garden ; the music of its rivers has sounded on the ear ; the liquid notes of its nightingales have arisen upwards and floated onwards ; the benignity and hallowed felicity of its newly created

inhabitants have thrown over the enchanting spot a deeper and a more delicious beauty, and we have been subdued into a gentle—we will not say sadness, for we have a “higher happiness than theirs; a happiness won through struggle with inward and outward foes, the happiness of power and moral victory, the happiness of disinterested sacrifices and wide-spread love, the happiness of boundless hope, and of ‘thoughts which wander through eternity.’ Still there are times when the spirit, oppressed with pain, worn with toil, tired of tumult, sick at the sight of guilt, wounded in its love, baffled in its hope, and trembling in its faith, almost longs for ‘the wings of a dove, that it might fly away,’ and take refuge amidst ‘the shady bowers,’ the ‘vernal airs,’ the ‘roses without thorns,’ the quiet, the beauty, the loveliness of Eden.”

We wish, too, in these moments, that we were some subtler essence, material and yet spiritual, that our souls might commingle with the perfumes of flowers; become the sweet scent, and yet retain the consciousness of distinct and separate being—atom united to atom; incorporated with the rich odour, and yet retain the sense of our own individual life. Thus may it be in the happier clime: in our tenderest embraces we may pass into the object of our love—become one with it—in form and shape to appear but one, and yet have all the vividness of a self-existence.

But the joyous lark, the fairy butterfly, the whispering woods, the soft breezes, all remind us of Paradise and heaven: the former is faded and

gone, the latter is yet our own. Every bud and every tree, every insect and every bird tells us of the better land ; and the throbbing and quenchless spirit of man gives reality to the fact ; the grandeur and the loveliness of nature ever feed the stirring flame, ever increase the intense thirst. We gaze on some quiet landscape, mellowed into golden beauty by the sun, its waters glancing beneath the light, its forests irradiated with brightness, its distant steeple shining like some silver streak of coming day, its sheep reclining beneath the shade of tree and hedge, its butterflies alighting on the wild-rose and woodbine, and immediately we feel the burnings within—the longings after immortality ; or we stand before the blue mountains with their crests of snow, and our pantings become more sublime and ethereal ; their gigantic forms seem part of another world ; with every-day life they have nothing to do ; they are the emblems of some eternal existence ; they contrast themselves strangely with the turmoil of cities ; whilst looking on them, we are divested of self, we merge into the one mighty spirit ; an everlastingness comes over us ; the noise and tumult of man cease here ; the larch and fir which skirt their sides give a melancholy tone to the mind ; the mortal is lost in the immortal ; the corruptible, in the incorruptible ; the transitory becomes firm, fixed, immoveable ; our fickleness changes itself into a deep and imperishable constancy ; our thoughts take the hue of heaven—they are vast and infinite ; our aspirations quicken ; our feelings are spiritualized :—

Witness this one fair lake, upon whose side
So oft at even 'tis my joy to roam—
Gazing upon a thousand things that hide
Their beauties, till the heart doth feel at home
With nature's self beneath her open dome—
That I do love the waters, and the woods,
And simple flowers that bloom in solitudes,
And the green meadows, and the soft blue skies,
And mountains with their ever-changeful dyes ;
And that I praise with no feigned melodies :
Yet did the fairest scene that ever beamed
On my rapt gaze—the loveliest morn or even,
Beneath whose spell I ever stood and dreamed,
Leave but a deeper thirst—this spirit needs a heaven !

There is something within us all which speaks of everlasting life and beauty : those seasons are far from few in which overwhelming thoughts rush on the soul ; we pant after eternal realities ; we weep because all around us is transitory ; we sorrow because all is given to decay. Man thus ever thinks : he gazes on the once blossoming rose, it is now shrivelled, dried, and without loveliness ; he looks on the pale, marble features of his own little one ere it is laid in the tomb, and he meditates on the instability of all things here below ; but in the midst of sadness there is hope ; he feels within himself an imperishable essence. Man is the child of anticipation ; in his happiest hours he dreams of something more lasting and exquisite still ; he creates something purer, holier, and better.

How sweet when the pale moon and the silver stars glimmer in the evening sky, when the leaves fall rustling to the earth, when the low winds come moaning by, to let loose the soul to revel in its imaginings ! The aspect of nature, so calm, yet so

melancholy, throws the mind into musings on its future destiny ; there is a solemnity in the twilight heavens, and the dim world ; there is, too, a deep, hushed stillness on the thoughts of the heart. In such an hour, what scenes of quiet bliss arise ! And yet we feel a sadness mingling its low music with our better hopes ; it clings, it cleaves to us ; we are bound down to this estranged orb ; we cannot get free ; we are in the midst of decay ; we long to be where change is unknown ; nothing satisfieth but perfect glory ; music and eloquence, architecture, painting, sculpture, poetry, do but increase and quicken these pantings after immortal, incorruptible, inextinguishable beauty ; they are glimpses of the unseen good, gleams of the radiant loveliness ; they stir, move, dilate our being ; they are part of that exquisite happiness we lost when Adam fell : all faded not then ; we still possess something divine, something of the original brightness.

These are periods when realities dawn upon us ; we behold our condition : we long after freedom ; the vanities of this passing wo-begone scene appear in their proper light ; they belong not to immortals hastening heavenward. We gaze on Revelation's page, and read that man can never die ; we lay hold of the soothing fact ; it lighteth up the being, it radiates the inner shrine ; the falling leaves, the moaning winds, the dim earth, the pale moon, and the twinkling stars, become then the echo of this great and sublime verity ; death and the grave are stripped of their terrors ; the tomb closes ; its over-hanging willows, as the breeze rustles by, breathe

out the music of immortality ; Paradise visions itself in tints of everlasting beauty ; we think of Eden, faded, but weep not ; there is a sweeter land above, without change, and without decay.

Why have we this love for the unseen and eternal ? Whence this longing after invisible things ? Why this fondness for something beyond the barrier of our present existence, if there is naught but annihilation there ; if nothing but profound nonentity, why this desire for spiritual knowledge ? Why this casting forward the inextinguishable thought into the Unknown, if being is not there ? Why these aspirations, which are in the bosom of every man, after a more ethereal and perfect nature ? Why does imagination so often kindle its fires in the world beyond, if we are not allied to something infinitely greater than anything on earth ? Why these pantings after some lasting good, if we have no bond which unites us to the Holiest ? Why these golden glimpses of the coming heaven ? Why these liquid hymnings of praise ? Why these shadowings of the lovely and the true ? Why the dawn streaking so often the horizon of man's soul and illumining its mysterious abysses with glory, if we are not the sons of the universal King and the universal Lord ?

The poem on Heavenly Rest, for beauty and elegance, is exquisite : we deem it the sweetest flower in the bouquet, the brightest gem in the casket.

Man in the morning to his work goes forth,
And rests at even :

Christian, remember, labour is for earth,
Repose for heaven.

Who now sows precious seed, though it may be
Too oft with weeping,
Shall, if he patiently await it, see
A joyous reaping.

Fruit shall be gathered, whose abundant store
Shall never perish ;
But blissful love, where weeping shall be o'er,
For ever cherish.

Then scatter freely, nor withhold thy hand
Till close of even :
Earth is the place of toil—the better land
Of rest is heaven.

Our poet is a domestic man. Amid the sanctities of a hallowed home he gathers his choicest mercies. Somehow or other, we have been too much accustomed to look for beauty out of this blessed retreat ; in this we have greatly erred ; the centre of all real beauty is home. The affections that strengthen themselves in this hallowed recess are highly poetical—the heart of childhood, its rainbow hopes, its courageous daring, its deep gushes of tenderness, its full confiding trust, its sweet simplicity, are all glowing with the divinest poetry ; the throbbing feelings, the watchful care, the thousand sacrifices of parental love are equally imbued with grace ; the endearments of an affianced pair, their devoted and clinging attachment, their resolve never to part from each other ; their innumerable acts of fondness, their chiding the anticipation, their readings, their twilight hours, their evening vespers, are each and all charactered with the purest light : all that is homeborn is unutterably fair and good ; the open-

hearted child, the yearning mother, the kind father, the young wife, the tender husband, are all poetical objects. How much beauty circles the domestic abode ; and we delight to see its expression embodied in the description of poet and the work of painter, for the soul which was indifferent before may be led to prize it now, and the heart that never throbbed when gazing on such holy scenes, may be bound once and for ever by the pure and powerful influence stealing from those exquisite works of art.

“ Children,” says the Scottish poet, “ are as dew-drops at day-spring on a seraph’s locks, roses that bathe about the well of life ;” and The Oracle, using another simile, has proclaimed in the deep intonation of its music, “ happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them.” And indeed, no one can look upon children without an emotion of inexpressible joy : they are comparatively innocent and untainted by sin ; they exhibit so much openness and confiding attachment. If they love, they will come and throw their little arms around your neck, and kiss again and again ; they act from feeling ; hence they so often judge correctly. They are bound by no fashion, but the fashion of affection ; bound by no tie, but the tie of souls : their very glance brings Eden in all its unfading beauty before us, their very talk is more than sweetest melody ; their eye is undimmed, their countenance unclouded. Bursts of glorious sunshine seem ever and anon to break from their free and lovely faces : we deem again that earth is without a sorrow,

earth without a thorn. It is true they sometimes quarrel, but it is a quarrel quickly ending in love and tenderness ; some passing shadow, soon to be lost in the brightness of a clear blue firmament.

Their domain is home ; they are the pledges of a true and holy faith ; the cup of labour becomes then the cup of blessing ; the curse of sin falls less heavily, the bitterness of our rebellion sinks less deeply ; mercy is mixed with judgment ; the domestic hearth is Paradise regained, is Eden restored : children are its loveliest, fairest flowers. They are smiled on each day by the sun of love ; they are breathed on by the breath of love : morning, noon, and night, they are carried to the throne, and blessings sought : they learn “the truth as it is in Jesus ;” it refines, expands, exalts them ; they become more divinely bright, more divinely beautiful : “Of such is the kingdom of heaven :”—

What were the grove without the wild
And merry warbler in the trees ?
What were the home without the child,
Whose laughter speaks his ecstasies ?

The minstrel may describe the one ;
But would ye rightly know the other,
Go, ask the father, who hath done
His toil, and hastens to child and mother.

Or rather—for the words of men
Feebly from swelling hearts arise—
Go, mark the gladsome child, and then
Look up into the mother’s eyes.

O, sweet it is in woods to roam
And list the merry warblers wild !
But sweeter far to hear at home
The dancing, laughing, joyous child !

Such is the delight children yield—yields the

rose a sweeter? such the happiness they give—give the stars a greater? Flowers are emblematical of their beauty; the stars significant of their brightness. They, indeed, are far more beautiful and bright than either: their little prattle, their beaming countenance, their confiding truth, their open-hearted affection, their looks of thrilling tenderness, their light and joyous step, their candour, their aspirations after something higher and nobler, their tears for the distress of the poor, their blushings of heroic purpose, their kindling souls at the tale of self-sacrifice, their gratitude, their deep remembrance, their free and boisterous mirth, their sincerity, their fervent prayers, are all so many silken cords or golden chains which bind us to children.

Our poet has sweetly written on all subjects connected with the domestic affections. His poems scent of the rich incense of a happy home; they breathe the softness, the peace, and tenderness of that holy retreat: his talents are suited to portray its worth and beauty. The verses to his Own Beloved, to their First-born, to their Daughter, are redolent with these feelings. The Dewdrop, and the lines on Evening, show strongly his deep-rooted love of nature; but it is to home that he clings and cleaves; it is his element, his earthly Paradise. And God hath cast thereon the sunshine of his favour, and the bright radiance of his countenance, and the unutterable blessings of his mercy. The smile of heaven is on it—the beams of the Holy One are there.

EMILY.

In the year 1759, there came a poem bearing the handwriting of one Emily to the adjudicators of the Seatonian prize. It spoke of Death ; but another was thought to speak in bolder and finer tones, and it was returned. Who he was, what he was, whence he came, whither he went, we know not ; whether the son of wealthy parents, fondled on the breast of beauty, courted by the great, or whether the child of poverty, and who had by struggles obtained an university education, we cannot tell ; whether born amid some wild, mountainous scenery, with nothing but rocks, and pines, and wild goats, and waters, and the blue heavens to look upon, or whether brought forth beneath some lowly roof in England's great metropolis, we are unable to discover.

There is something touching in this brief memorial—a few lines tell it all ; the history of a life is compressed within a sentence. His fears, his hopes, his aspirations, his throbings after bliss, his romantic schemes of happiness, his labours, his rambles, his melancholies, his disappointments, his loves, are wholly unknown. So passes man, and the son of man ! His poem is all that we have ; it

is the *hic jacet*; it tells of some one, but of whom we cannot ken. There is the mouldering tomb-stone, it is partly covered with moss; nothing more than the name is traceable: across the heavens came a star, and waned; among the students came a poet, who sang of sable Death, and perished.

We often think of his resting-place. Where is it? Is it in some shady dell, near which rose that village spire, on which he used to gaze so often at the sunset hour? or is it in some churchyard now built upon and forgotten? Is it by the murmuring of the silver stream, or by the city's constant hum? The eye which once grew eloquent whilst gazing on Beauty is orbless and rayless now; the pulse has forgotten to beat, the throbings of the heart are no longer heard; he lies silent; no sound disturbs him: the birds may sing in brake and field, the wild flower may rear its loveliness to the summer sun, the voice of reaper may rise upwards, the perfumes of rose may scent every breath of wind, the stars may shine resplendently, and again fade out, the storm may bellow, and the lightnings gleam on the dark, tempestuous blackness, the day-god may ascend, and the day-god may descend, but our poet is as unconcerned as if all was silence and inactivity.

Ah, once it was otherwise; his heart vibrated when gazing on creation; like us, he loved the gay glory of the earth; like us, pensive thoughts would steal over his soul at the evening hour; and he, too, would think of friend, and kin, and love, in that dim tranquillizing season; and the stars of

heaven would breathe spiritual inspiration, and that silver moon look beautifully pale ; they would speak in language liquid as the nightingale's when heard across some gentle stream, yet deep, deep as their own beauty ; and this would cheer him, when, sitting by the midnight lamp, he turned the classic page, and hoped, and sighed, and prayed for immortality.

But we have one expression of his heart : it is original, pathetic, beautiful. Hearken :—

The festive roar of laughter, the warm glow
 Of brisk-eyed joy, and friendship's genial bowl,
 Wit's seasoned converse, and the liberal flow
 Of unsuspecting youth, profuse of soul,
 Delight not ever ; from the boisterous scene
 Of riot far, and Comus' wild uproar,
 From folly's crowd, whose vacant brow serene
 Was never knit to wisdom's frowning lore,
 Permit me, ye time-hallowed domes, ye piles
 Of rude magnificence, your solemn rest,
 Amid your fretted vaults, and lengthening aisles,
 Lonely to wander ; no unholy guest
 That means to break, with sacrilegious tread,
 The marble slumbers of your monumented dead.

Permit me, with sad musings, that inspire
 Unlaboured numbers apt, your silence drear
 Blameless to wake, and with the Orphean lyre,
 Fitly attempered, soothe the merciless ear
 Of Hades, and stern Death, whose iron sway
 Great nature owns through all her wide domain.

Know, on the stealing wing of time shall flee
 Some few, some short-lived years, and all is past ;
 A future bard these awful domes may see,
 Muse o'er the present age, as I the last,
 Who, mouldering in the grave, yet once, like you,
 The various maze of life were seen to tread,
 Each bent their own peculiar to pursue,

As custom urged or wilful nature led :
Mixed with the various crowd's inglorious clay,
The nobler virtues undistinguished lie ;
No more to melt with beauty's heaven-born ray,
No more to wet compassion's tearful eye,
Catch from the poet raptures not their own,
And feel the thrilling melody of sweet renown.

Where is the master-hand, whose semblant art
Chiselled the marble into life, or taught
From the well-pencilled portraiture to start
The nerve that beat with soul, the brow that thought ?
Cold are the fingers that in stone-fixed trance
The mute attention riveting, to the lyre
Struck language ; dimmed the poet's quick-eyed glance,
All in wild raptures flashing heaven's own fire.
Shrunk is the sinewed energy, that strung
The warrior's arm. Where sleeps the patriot breast
Whilom that heaved impassioned?—where the tongue
That lanced its lightning on the tow'ring crest
Of sceptred insolence, and overthrew
Giant oppression, leagued with all her earth-born crew ?

All in the dust ; the song, the dance, and eloquent oration no longer move them ; the whirlwind's sweep and the thistle's down pass over them, alike unnoticed and alike unfelt ; the blue heavens gaze down as before ; no change in them ; the earth is fresh and beautiful as then ; it looks not old ; we it is who change, we it is who moulder, we it is who are forgotten. The heavens and the earth live—live ; we die, we fade away, we sink into oblivion ; every hour but bears us to the tomb, every moment but hurries us to the grave ; thus humanity passes onwards, making room for those who follow. One would think that the ocean, and the sky, and the dry land would weep ! but no, they are silent ; they move, but

there is no busy hum ; they revolve, but there is no change. Their elements remain ; nature tells us nothing, it gives no certain hope ; we cannot, we dare not trust it ; “a dark impenetrable curtain shrouds us in, of which the sight is fearful, and the neighbourhood appalling. All men are moving towards this dark verge with ceaseless and anxious motion ; and sometimes it will approach and shroud up multitudes prematurely in its invisible womb, and all trace of them is for ever gone : it flits and shifts before us with fearful incertitude, and no man laying himself down at night is sure that he will rise again in the morning among his friends and in his native land ; but though it shift awhile, this gloomy bourne of our pilgrimage hath an unshifting limit, behind which it never recedes ; and soon and the extreme angle of that limit is reached by all. On we move with endless succession, helpless as the sheep to the slaughter ; and the moment we touch the dark confine, we disappear, and all clue of us is lost ; you may cry aloud, but we hear and answer not ; you may give us any signal, but we see and return it not. No voice cometh from within the curtain, all there is silent and unknown ; how it fares with them, whether they merge at once into another country, whether they are out at sea, by what compass or map they steer, or whether they are lost in that gulf and abyss of being—no man for thousands and thousands of years had the shadow of an imagination. It was very mysterious ; each man as he passed ‘shuffled off his mortal coil,’ left us his slough, and

nothing of himself ; his reason, his feelings, his society, his love, all went with him ; here with us was left all of him that we were wont to see, and touch, and handle ; how he could exist apart from these, the helps and instruments of being, was all a phantom and a dream ; the existence, if existence there was, no human faculties could fix a thought upon ; his spirit, if spirit there was, takes its fate in cold nakedness ; but how it dwells, or feels, or suffers, or enjoys, when thus divested, is altogether incomprehensible.” The rose that blossomed yesterday, and threw upwards its perfume to the clear sky, is to-day in the dust, its form, its beauty, its odour gone ; the tree which spread its foliage to a hundred summer suns has fallen in the forest ; and to-morrow, no vestige will remain. How this can be we know not ; all is mysterious ; and our kinsmen and friends—a few years since, and we received their morning and evening salutations—now they are in the tomb. Do they still exist ? is the soul imperishable ? does the heart vibrate, though in another clime ? do they forget the earth ? remember they their former being and their former state ? are they changed into something more glorious ? do they weep ? do pensive reveries breathe their sad music in that other land ? is it dark there as here ? are there struggles ? is there woe ? or is all blessedness, a realm of unruffled rest and unbroken calm ? Creation is silent with her myriad stars and million forms. Look upwards :—

Fast to the driving winds the marshalled clouds
Sweep discontinuous o'er the ethereal plain !

Another still upon another crowds,
All hastening downwards to their native main.
Thus passes o'er through varied life's career,
Man's fleeting age ; the seasons as they fly
Snatch from us in their course, year after year,
Some sweet connexion, some endearing tie.
The parent, ever honoured, ever dear,
Claims from the filial breast the pious sigh ;
A brother's urn demands the kindred tear,
And gentle sorrows gush from friendship's eye.
To-day we frolic in the rosy bloom
Of jocund youth—the morrow knells us to the tomb.

How expressive the last couplet ! how pregnant with meaning ! the experience of ages seems compressed therein ; it is a fine, masculine sweep of the lyre. In the catalogue of the “ thousand maladies” which “ are posted round with wretched man to wage eternal strife unseen,” is gathered all the hideousness of death ; there is no one redeeming feature ; not one ray issues from heaven ; the horizon is all dark ; the hemisphere is covered with black, heavy clouds ; there is not the glimmering of a single star ; it is one ebon mass. The earth seems to be a lone, sepulchral abode ; we move in uncertain twilight ; the tarnished brightness comes from the spirit ; it reveals the chaotic gloom ; the winds bear on their bosom the sighs of broken hearts and the pangs of separations ; the cry of despair, the voice of throbbing agony, the dying wail, the shriek of severed loves rise upwards to the thunderous sky ; Vitality is in ruins, Existence is broken up, Being is snapped asunder, and “ cast as some noisome weed away.”

But we tremble not, we do not shrink, we have

no fear ; the dawn is breaking on this sad night.
In decay we live ; our dust is vital with immor-
tality ; death opens the ponderous gates of eternity ;
it draws aside the veil ; it takes from us our frail
existence, and gives imperishable being ; the sick-
room resounds with cheerful melodies ; the dying
eye is lighted up ; the pale countenance is irradia-
ted with brightness ; the languid and the parched
lips grow eloquent again ; there are sounds as if an
angel trod ; there are scenes as if heaven were re-
vealed ; there are glances as if the Eternal smiled ;
the chamber scents with the sweetest odours, beams
with the clearest sunshine ; there are lookings for-
ward, holy anticipations, delicious hopes :—

The good alone are fearless ; they alone,
Firm and collected in their virtue, brave
The wreck of worlds, and look unshrinking down
On the dread yawnings of the ravenous grave :
Thrice happy, who the blameless road along
Of honest praise, hath reached the vale of death !
Around him, like ministrant cherubs, throng
His better actions, to the parting breath
Singing their blessed requiems ; he the while
Gently reposing on some friendly breast,
Breathed out his benizons ; then with a smile
Of soft complacence, lays him down to rest,
Calm as the slumbering infant : from the goal
Free and unbounded flies the disembodied soul.

JOHN W. FLETCHER.

THE rain pours down this eleventh day of August. The streets are almost deserted. The pavement is wet and cold, and the dingy brick houses look dreary. Now and then a carriage passes, the coachman drenched, passengers either on their way to the station or returning to their pleasant homes from the summer's holiday. Rain, rain ; what a patterning lonely sound it has ! How it endears one's own roof-tree !

When thus prevented from out-door labor, we would gladly fulfil our intention of writing a few lines on the poetry of John W. Fletcher. Little did we anticipate it accomplished in this great commercial town. No, we had imagined some rose-clustered rural home, some quiet antique Kirbymoorside.

It was there we first became acquainted with Tryphena and other Poems. The title brings back sweet memories of that sweet place. The rides to Cockan three sundays in every month, through sunshine and storm are not forgotten. When we reached the hill overlooking Bransdale and gazed down on its little chapel, "the dead all slumbering round," our feelings were subdued and a sabbath

stillness crept over us. We have stopped the horse on that hill-top, miles away from any town, away, away over moor and glen, where naught but the cry of the wild fowl is heard, we have stopped and looked upon the scene in summer all fresh and beautiful and glowing in the morning sunlight, in winter all covered with snow, the flakes blowing keenly against the face, and causing us to think of the warm wood-fire in the farmstead near the church.

Then came the silver tinkle of the bell, the gathering together of the people, the solemn prayer, and the preaching of the Cross. Simple fabric, with its warm-hearted congregation, often does it come before us a touching memory of the past !

After service over and friendly greetings and a little rest, we rode back across the lone waste till we came to Gillimoor, a quaint village with its quaint chapel overlooking a richly-wooded dell, with the beautiful Lodge of Dowthwaite lying below. Service there, then three miles and to our own dear home, the birthplace of our first-born, when new feelings were awakened and a pure and holy fountain of the heart unsealed. And it was sweet after being out, before day-break, snow or rain beating down, or hill-mists drenching one with their cold folds, to catch a sight of our own happy home, and to receive all the nameless tendernesses of true-hearted affection.

Sweet Lower Hall, how often comes it back with its tall trees covered with ivy, its flowering shrubs and evergreens. Sweet and very pleasant were the

days passed therein : days of love and charities and schemes for the good of the flock. We had wished to have made it the Home of the parish wherein each might have found a welcome. But no, that dream is passed ; our life must be spent amid far different scenes. If spent for God and the world's renovation, we are content ; nothing higher, nobler, greater for the minister of Jesus !

A little rest, sometimes none, then to the parish church, wearied, worn-out, and completely exhausted. Yet, when the service began, the organ pealed, the people sang, our drooping spirits revived ; and there, far off from the busy world, shut in by Night and the Dead, how sweet it has been to tell of heaven, the home, the roof-tree of the Christian. Then the service ceased, the people departed, the streets were still, and around our own fireside beamed faces of love and happiness.

Here on this rainy day their former Curate prays for blessings on them all. Townsmen and dalesmen are not unremembered. Their kindnesses have not been forgotten. Our young dream of being with them for life is gone, of making them happy, of leading them beside still waters and amid green pastures to the sunny clime, the holy land where sickness, disease and death are unknown, that dream has faded and gone down. But the simple earnest petition for blessings on Vicar and people may not be in vain.

It was in that quiet town we first read the poems of our author. One fine night, the heavens covered with stars and burning like the Urim and Thum-

min of God's High Priest when lit up with the divine answer, we read the following exquisite lines. We felt that a new poet had arisen, one who could touch the lyre with a master's hand.

Where wild and free the sounding tempests sweep
The dark-blue wave ;
Build in the winding caverns of the deep,
The sailor's grave.

Wrapt in his arms, stained with the mingled blood
Of friends and foes ;
Where fighting for his home the warrior stood,
Let him repose.

With all death's panoply, a grim array,
In pomp and state,
Among his sepulchred forefathers, lay
The proud, the great.

But where the mighty mountain forest weaves
A sombre shade ;
Lulled by the rustling of the summer leaves,
Let me be laid.

Above me let the tempest whistle loud,
The lightning play ;
Let the hoar grandeur of creation shroud
My lifeless clay.

Let there be no vain pomp, no useless form,
No show for me ;
I have been cradled by the cloud and storm,
I would be free.

I have been nursed by Nature, let me rest
My weary head
Upon her wild and weather-beaten breast,
When I am dead.

Where in her power and grandeur she extends
Unchained and wild ;
Where every aspect of her beauty blends,
The stern, the mild ;

Where the high forest trees their summits wave
Before the breeze ;
Where the tall craggy precipices brave
The storms and seas ;
Where the impetuous foaming torrent flings
Abroad its spray ;
Where the flower blossoms, and the blithe bird sings
The dawn of day ;
Be there my tomb,—on some soft grassy mound,
Still and serene,
With Nature's majesty encompassed round ;
A solemn scene.
My monument shall be the mountain heights,
My knell the breeze ;
The watchers o'er my grave the heavenly lights,
The rocks and trees.
There, where the elements have built a throne,
By man untrod ;
With Nature leave my ashes all alone,
And Nature's God.

Solemn melody for the solemn night that enwrapped the world ! What stirrings of unutterable things in the Curate's soul as these deeply plaintive and immeasurably grand notes rolled upon his ear. The Dirge of Death swept by, and then he turned his eye upwards to those bright stars, shining so mysteriously in the midnight sky. The Dirge of Death swept by, and there came breathings of hope, whisperings of immortality. The Dirge of Death swept by, and there came the full hymn of resurrection and of endless life. The Dirge of Death swept by, and there came new heavens and a new earth, and millions of beautiful forms disporting themselves amid undecaying scenes and untainted sweets : and Death had no existence there !

His lines on The Poet are in a higher and loftier key. There is a melancholy grandeur, like a gorgeous sunset before a storm, in many of the verses. A finer and more glorious hymn to Freedom has never been sung by ancient or by modern bard. It is perfectly sustained throughout. It is the trumpet-blast before the battle ; the lightning-flash before the thunder peal : the noble utterance of a noble genius.

He died at sunset, and its hues were wreathed
 Around his head ;
The dying glories of the day were breathed
 About his bed.

He had stood up in a benighted land,
 A beacon fire ;
And long and loud and with a master-hand
 He swept the lyre.

He saw that tyrants ruled and crushed the weak
 Down to the grave ;
While there was none to heed, and none to speak,
 And none to save :

He saw the poor oppressed, and dim, and dark,
 Almost resigned ;
Scarce conscious of the half-extinguished spark
 Of noble mind :

The laws of God he saw mankind conspired
 To break and spurn ;
He saw, and felt his soul, by heaven inspired,
 Within him burn.

He had been nursed amid the sombre shades
 Of mountain caves,
Solemn and grand as when the sunlight fades
 Upon the waves.

He had imbibed the spirit which extends
 Its sovereign sway .

Where'er the sky its broad blue banner bends,
The wild waves play.

From childhood he had wandered like a breeze,
Among the vast
And chequered shadows which the forest trees
And mountain cast;

'Mid pathless woods and precipices grim
And grey with years;
Where mossy fountains sing their silver hymn,
Like Love in tears:

On rocky heights where grandeur sits alone,
Wild and sublime,
And where the night-winds chant with solemn tone
The dirge of time.

From stars, and streams, and rainbows, all around,
Beneath, above;

From every golden sight and silver sound,
He gathered Love.

The boundless sky, the torrent's headlong leap,
The rush and roar

Of ocean's chainless billows, as they sweep
The sounding shore;

The rustling pine boughs and the summer song
Of bees and birds

Told him, in tones more eloquent and strong
Than human words,

Of Freedom; the great birthright of our race,
From earliest time

Conferred by God on man; in every place,
In every clime.

And he was moved to leave each vale of song,
Each rock and glen,

To scatter seeds of Love and Hope among
His fellow men.

Oh! dark and dreary were the scenes that crossed
His aching sight;

The vessel of mankind was tempest-tost,
And all was night:

Night, sad and starless, not a ray to pierce
The gathered gloom ;
For all were rushing headlong to their fierce
And final doom.

He wept for those who suffered ; on the earth,
As clouds above,
He stood and shed his shining spirit forth
In showers of love.

He hurled the blazing firebrands of his song
At tyrants' thrones ;
Whose fabric was built up by crime and wrong,
With blood and groans.

He stood sublime and like a thunder-cloud
Deep, dark and dire,
He lightened far and wide, the tyrants bowed
Before the fire.

The nations started up and felt their soul
Responsive ring
To him whose spirit could so grandly roll,
So sweetly sing.

They rose and shook their shackled arms, while wide
O'er land and sea
The echo answered as they loudly cried,
" We will be free ! "

From town and tower, and mingling with the waves,
From field and glen,
There rose the shout ; no longer now of slaves,
The shout of men.

" We will be free !" ten thousand voices swelled
The solemn cry ;
And up it rolled above the hills of eld
Against the sky.

" We will be free !" they cried, and bowed the head
And bent the knee
To Him, who, when their hope was almost fled,
Had heard their plea.

He sang to them of Love and Hope and Faith ;
He bade them bear

A mind undaunted by the fear of death,
Undimmed by care.

He taught them that though vengeance had been vowed,
'Twas nobler far
To pardon ; for that vengeance was a cloud,
Mercy a star.

He nursed in them the thought of noble deeds,
Sublime and high ;
Which prompts, when Freedom calls, and Honor leads,
To "do or die."

The loud reverberations of his words,
Awaked their long-
Latent ancestral fire ; and courage girds
The trembling throng.

His pure and holy accents like a night
Of stars, diffused
Their magic power ; and every soul with light
Divine suffused.

And now his work was done, his task fulfilled ;
And like the sun,
He left behind his latest rays to gild
The race he run.

He died at sunset, and its hues were wreathed
Around his head ;
The dying glories of the day were breathed
About his bed.

We might quote much more from our author, but these two poems prove him to be a man of true and sterling genius. We admire his clear distinct utterance. We always know his meaning. There is nothing mystic : it is plain, beautiful, intelligible English. We admire, too, his fine moral qualities ; and above all the genial piety that pervades his pages. He for one, does not require a New Revelation, he can still see the finger-prints of flame in

earth's antiquated Bible. He for one, does not look for a New Man, he can still see in Jesus the flower of manhood, "the fairest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely." And with this childlike homage and simple faith he can breathe such strains as *My Grave* and *The Poet*; strains equal to the finest in any language, strains which are worthy of England's highest bards. One glorious lyric brought immortality to Charles Wolfe; these shall shed the same lustre around the name of John W. Fletcher when his heart has ceased to beat, and his form moulders beneath the quiet sod.

GEORGE GILFILLAN.

GRANDEUR is the distinguishing feature in the writings of this author ; grandeur of imagery, illustration and language. Grandeur broods over every page, the grandeur of the setting sun on the ocean-wave, or on the dark waters of some magnificent loch.

In this great and oppressive characteristic he differs from almost every other critic. Hazlitt is grand, but not always ; tints of simpler beauty are seen gleaming on his page, and frequently does he carry his reader away to some quiet sunny nook as the old garden of Boxhill. Then too his language is elegant and even chaste at times ; he swells indeed occasionally into grandeur of thought and expression, but it is a relief to the sunshine and delicious perfumes of his paintings. Gilfillan never loses sight of grandeur : it meets us in every line ; it glows in every essay. Even the softness and melting sweetness of Keats cannot subdue him into anything less gorgeous : his periods still roll on with magnificence of meaning and illustration.

To Leigh Hunt he is the very opposite. No sunny line and glancing smiling lightsome mood ; grandeur moves slowly and oftentimes oppressively along. He has none of the clear beauty of Jeffrey, none of the chaste and charming graces of the

elder Alison. His style resembles Burke's and Croly's : and yet it is his own.

How grand is the following on Isaiah :—

"I felt," says Sir W. Herschel, "after a considerable sweep through the sky with my telescope, Sirius announcing himself from a great distance ; and at length he rushed into the field of view with all the brightness of the rising sun, and I had to withdraw my eyes from the dazzling object." So have we, looking out from our "specular tower," seen from a great way off the approach of the "mighty orb of song"—the divine Isaiah—and have felt awe-struck in the path of his coming. He was a prince amid a generation of princes—a Titan among a tribe of Titans ; and of all the prophets who rose on aspiring pinion to meet the Sun of Righteousness, it was his—the Evangelical Eagle—to mount highest, and to catch on his wing the richest anticipation of his rising. It was his, too, to pierce most clearly down into the abyss of the future, and become an eye-witness of the great events which were in its womb enclosed. He is the most eloquent, the most dramatic, the most poetic—in one word, the most complete, of the Bards of Israel. He has not the bearded majesty of Moses—the gorgeous natural description of Job—Ezekiel's rough and rapid vehemence, like a red torrent from the hills seeking the lake of Galilee in the day of storm—David's high gusts of lyric enthusiasm, dying away into the low wailings of penitential sorrow—Daniel's awful allegory—John's piled and enthroned thunders ; his power is solemn, sustained—at once measured and powerful ; his step moves gracefully, at the same time that it shakes the wilderness. His imagery, it is curious to notice, amidst all its profusion, is seldom snatched from the upper regions of the Ethereal—from the terrible crystal, or the stones of fire—from the winged cherubim, or the eyed wheels—from the waves of the glassy sea, or the blanched locks of the Ancient of Days ; but from lower, though lofty objects—from the glory of Lebanon, the excellency of Sharon, the waving forests of Carmel, the willows of Kedron, the flocks of Kedar, and the rams of Nebaioth. Once only does he pass within the vail—"in the year that King Uzziah died"—and he enters trembling, and he withdraws in haste, and he bears

out, from amidst the surging smoke and the tempestuous glory, but a single "live coal" from off the altar. His prophecy opens with sublime complaint; it frequently irritates into noble anger, it subdues into irony, it melts into pathos; but its general tone is that of victorious exultation. It is one long rapture. You see its author standing on an eminence, bending forward over the magnificent prospect it commands, and with clasped hands, and streaming eyes, and eloquent sobs, indicating his excess of joy. It is true of all the prophets that they frequently seem to see rather than foresee, but especially true of Isaiah. Not merely does his mind overleap ages, and take up centuries as a "little thing;" but his eye overleaps them too, and seems literally to *see* the word Cyrus inscribed on his banner—the river Euphrates turned aside—the Cross and Him who bare it. We have little doubt that many of his visions became objective, and actually painted themselves on the prophet's eye. Would we had witnessed that awful eye, as it was piercing the depths of time—seeing the To Be glaring through the thin mist of the Then!

Grander still is this on the same prophet:—

He realizes the old name which gradually merged in that of prophet—"seer." He is the seer—an eye running to and fro throughout the future: and as you contemplate him, you feel what a power was that sight of the olden prophets, which pierced the thickest veils, found the turf thin and the tombstone transparent, saw into the darkness of the past, the present, and the to come—the most hidden recesses of the human heart—the folds of Destruction itself; that sight which, in Ezekiel, bare the blaze of the crystal and the eyes of the wheels—which in Daniel, read at a glance the hieroglyphics of heaven—and which in John, blenched not before the great white throne. Many eyes are glorious: that of beauty, with its mirthful or melancholy meaning; that of the poet, rolling in its fine frenzy; that of the sage, worn with wonder, or luminous with mild and settled intelligence; but who shall describe the eye of the prophet, across whose mirror swept the shadows of empires, stalked the ghosts of kings, stretched in their loveliness the landscapes of a regenerated earth, and lay, in its terror, red and still, the image of the judgment-seat of Almighty God? Then did not sight—the highest faculty of matter or mind—

come culminating to an intense and dazzling point, trembling upon Omniscience itself?

Grandeur, too, in this description of Kilmeny :—

We have seen this scene from the summit of Dunmore and the side of Melville's monument, which stands upon it: seen it at all hours, in all circumstances, and in all seasons—in the clear morning, while the smoke of a thousand cottages was seen rising through the dewy air, and when the mountains seemed not thoroughly awakened from their night's repose—in the garish noon-day, when the feeling of mystery was removed by the open clearness, but that of majesty in form and outline remained—in the afternoon with its sunbeams streaking huge shadows, and writing characters of fire upon all the hills—in the golden evening, when the sun was going down over Benmore in blood—in the dim evening to us dearer still, when a faint rich mist was steeping all the landscape in religious hues—in the waste night, while the moon was rising red in the north east, like a beacon or a torch uplifted by some giant-hand—under the breezes and bashful green of spring—in the laughing luxuriance of summer—under the yellow shade of autumn—at the close of autumn—when the woods were red and the stubble sovereign of the fields—and again when hill, valley, and wood were spotted with snow, have seen it in a hush so profound that you might have imagined nature listening for some mysterious tidings, and hardly dared to breathe; and in the cloudy and dark day, while the thunder was shaking the column and the lightning painting the landscape. And gazing at it, whether in glimmer or in gloom, have we sometimes fancied that we saw that fearless form “gaeing” up thro’ the plains of Dalwhinnie and the fairy plantations of Dunira.

To pu’ the cress-flower from the well,
The scarlet hyp and the hynd berrye,
And the nut that hang frae the hazel tree,
For Kilmeny was pure as pure could be.

And when gloaming especially had poured her dim divine lustre over the dark hills and white castle of Abruchill, and allowed the last lingering ray of sunshine to rest on the crest of Benvoirlich, and hushed the streams of Glenlednick behind, and drawn a dewy veil over the plain of Dalgirross before,

and softened the call of the cauldron in the glen below, and suffused over all the landscape of earth and heaven a sense unutterable of peace, and introduced into the scene, as a last glorious touch, the moon to enhance the scene of solemnity, and to deepen the feeling of repose, have we, reclining on the hill, and seeing the stars coming out above the silent column, thought of the “eve in a sinless world,” when,

In ecstacy of sweet devotion,
Oh then the glen was all in motion;

and owned the power of the “consecration,” and felt the might of the “poet’s dream.”

And yet there are sometimes touches of beauty ; what more exquisite than this on Tennyson’s poetry ?

It is the voice and lute of Ariel ; but heard not in a solitary and enchanted island, but in a modern drawing-room with beautiful women bending round and moss-roses breathing, in their faint fragrance, through the half-opened windows.

But our limits forbid further quotations. We feel that we have not done justice to this splendid man. We might fill page after page and chapter after chapter with merely extracts from his writings. His thoughts are magnificent. He is like his own land with its gorgeous sunsets amid the wide-stretching and heaven-towering mountains : like the splendour of his own lochs shadowing in their deep waters the sublime scenery of the midnight sky : he is like the earth with her rolling oceans and beauteous isles, and huge continents, and dark forests. He is part of the great universe : the spirit-breathing hymn of heaven ; the glorious and divine song throwing tenfold beauty, and shedding tenfold lustre on the vast creation : well may he be one of Scotia’s mightiest sons !

JAMES GRAHAME.

AFTER perusing the immortal Milton, and beholding the sublimity of the celestial world pictured to the imagination by his master-spirit ; after accompanying Atherstone in his dream of suns and systems replete with life and loveliness ; and after sweeping immensity, vast and infinite, with Byron in his Cain, we are refreshed by the tender lays of Grahame—his perception of beauty, and his calm and holy Sabbath scenes ; we are once more drawn to earth, and find that it still bears marks of pristine grace, and still has moments of heavenly peace. And had not sin tainted our very nature, what a land of rest had ours not been !—had iniquity not entered, the intellect would have been pure and lofty, the image of the Invisible ; with angels we should have held communion : the shadowy even-tide would have beheld the converse ; the twilight star would have looked down upon the hallowed intercourse. But rebellion lifted up its standard ; then followed the curse ; the mind mouldered, it became a dim, dark ruin ; where once the bright thought played, the vampire crawled. Think we what eloquence we have lost ! the tongue cannot now disclose its burning language. The poet's fire

burns dimly, beauty has faded, the eye forgets its utterance, the countenance, which erst was radiant with high resolve, is clouded, song is hushed, the lyre's strings are unchorded, the domestic affections are sullied. Who can tell what these would have been, had we remained perfect? who paint their untainted sweets? There would have been no anger to break the melody of their reign; no jarring sound to lacerate the heart: all would have been one fond swell of inexpressible bliss. The lips would have disclosed the passion of the soul; the atmosphere would have been perfumed with love's richest incense; its clear blue sky would have never been shadowed with unkindness; no discord would have been heard. There would have been hopes, but hopes springing from inherent purity; there would have been struggles, but struggles after a higher blessedness.

Our evenings, though sin-infected, are still beautiful; but what would have been their enchanting loveliness, had we continued our homage to the Eternal? Even now, Eden arises before us clothed with the soft grey of twilight; on yonder bank repose the lion and the lamb; the dark majestic cedars cast their umbrage on the rippling waters; there are flowers of every hue and clime. Along that winding walk stroll the happy pair; the sky is dimpled with the golden clouds of sunset. Presently a silver spot radiates in the empyrean: it brightens, enlarges, expands. Music slowly breaks; it is the melody of heaven! Gentle voices are heard. We gaze; we listen. In the firmament we behold

the angels of the Highest : the fair intelligences alight, and are greeted by man ; they turn towards the magnificent west. Hark, the vesper hymn sweeps upwards to the Throne !

But we have one season left sweeter than Eden's sweetest hours. If sin blighted the flowery Paradise, and nipped its odoriferous fruits, Christ has also thrown over the earth a more beautiful and enchanting grace : the dew of the fairer land is on us ; the sun of the better world shines in our horizon ; the gales of the soft and peaceful clime breathe ever and anon their incense ; the ground once more scents with eternal flowers : immortality is ours. The sigh of repentance, and the tear of penitence, and the voice of faith tend upwards. One day in seven is given us ; we then rest. Delicious bliss is bestowed ; Heaven pours out its unruffled serenity.

The calm and quiet Sabbath is the theme of our poet ; the strings of his harp are tuned to its sweetest melody. The pious soul feels the influence of his strain ; its very name is music sweeter than Israfil ; its bliss is assimilated with that of heaven. The anthem of worship rolls upwards from every star ; the matin song issues from the lips of countless intelligences. The thrones, principalities, and powers, utter the praises of the Immortal. And now from this earth may be heard the tender whisperings of love, and the swell of a mighty chorus to the Creator ; the murmurings of rebellion cease ; the flag of iniquity is lowered ; the hoarse discord dies away ; the haughty defiance is carried on the

breeze no longer. Man stands and hearkens. The homage-hymn deepens every hour. There is a sound of inextinguishable joy; creation brightens; the reign of sin waxes feeble; oppression is overthrown.

It is beautiful to behold the sun arise, scattering his radiant beams on a world teeming with loveliness, while the peace of the King sweeps onwards from "palm-peaks of Paradise," telling of the holy Sabbath. The earth lies in all the freshness of early dawn; a tranquillity pervades the wide-spread universe:—

How still the morning of the hallowed day!
Mute is the voice of rural labour, hushed
The ploughboy's whistle, and the milkmaid's song:
The scythe lies glittering in the dewy wreath
Of tedded grass, mingling with fading flowers
That yestermorn bloomed waving in the breeze.
Sounds the most faint attract the ear—the hum
Of early bee, the trickling of the dew,
The distant bleating midway up the hill.
Calmness seems throned on yon unmoving cloud.
To him who wanders o'er the upland lees,
The blackbird's note comes mellower from the dale;
And sweeter from the sky the gladsome lark
Warbles his heaven-tuned song; the lulling brook
Murmurs more gently down the deep-sunk glen;
While from yon lowly roof, whose curling smoke
O'ermounts the mist, is heard at intervals
The voice of psalms, the simple song of praise.

It is sweet to stand on some hill-top, and listen to the now swelling and now fading chimes, to see the simple villagers pour into the old grey church, through its ivied porch, while the sun ascends the sky in glory; the corn-field waves in the breeze;

the rooks caw in yonder wood ; the bee and butterfly settle on the wild flowers of the straggling lane. At such an hour, and at such a place, the music of the bells is doubly beautiful ; heaven-like their harmony, exhilarating their minstrelsy. They now arise in fairy tones, now softly die away ; the melting and spirit-soothing cadence seems to proclaim the tidings of hallowed peace and joy ; their silver tinklings invest creation with deeper and lovelier colours ; it is then that we feel the worthlessness of all our pantings after greatness ; we behold the hollowness of earthly vanities ; we are united with a firmer and a fonder tie to the Eternal ; but we stroll downwards to the hamlet's church, and enter the sacred fane :—

A placid stillness reigns,
Until the man of God, worthy the name,
Opens the book, and reverentially
The stated portion reads. A pause ensues.
The organ breathes its distant thunder-notes,
Then swells into a diapason full :
The people, rising, sing ; with harp, with harp,
And voice of psalms, harmoniously attuned,
The various voices blend ; the long-drawn aisles,
At every close, the lingering strain prolong.
And now the tubes a softened stop controls ;
In softer harmony the people join,
While liquid whispers from yon orphan-band
Recall the soul from adoration's trance,
And fill the eye with pity's gentle tears.
Again the organ-peal, loud, rolling, meets
The hallelujahs of the choir. Sublime
A thousand notes symphoniously ascend,
As if the whole were one, suspended high
In air, soaring heavenward.

The gentle wind bears onwards the deep-toned music to the sick man's ears :—

Raised on his arm, he lists the cadence close,
Yet thinks he hears it still : his heart is cheered ;
He smiles on death ; but, ah ! a wish will rise—
Would I were now beneath that echoing roof !
No lukewarm accents from my lips should flow ;
My heart would sing ; and many a Sabbath-day
My steps should thither turn ; or, wandering far
In solitary paths, where wild-flowers blow,
There would I bless His name who led me forth
From death's dark vale, to walk amid those sweets—
Who gives the bloom of health once more to glow
Upon this cheek, and lights this languid eye.

How natural is this scene : the sick-room opens to view ; we see the pale inhabitant ; he is raised on one arm ; “again the harmony comes o'er the vale ;” his ear catches the distant hymn ; his eye is heavenwards ; his spirit throbs with joy ; the wish arises for health and strength ; he promises to be holy, should his life be spared. Live, and be as thou hast vowed !

One other quotation from *The Sabbath*, and we proceed to speak of Grahame's minor poems :—

Oh, Scotland ! much I love thy tranquil dales ;
But most on Sabbath eve, when low the sun
Slants through the upland copse, 'tis my delight,
Wandering and stopping oft, to hear the song
Of kindred praise arise from humble roofs ;
Or when the simple service ends, to hear
The lifted latch, and mark the grey-haired man,
The father and the priest, walk forth alone
Into his garden-plot, or little field,
To commune with his God in secret prayer—
To bless the Lord, that, in his downward years,

His children are about him : sweet meantime,
The thrush that sings upon the aged thorn,
Brings to his view the days of youthful years,
When that same aged thorn was but a bush.
Nor is the contrast between youth and age
To him a painful thought ; he joys to think
His journey near a close, heaven is his home.

It is sweet to visit the temple of the living God when twilight sheds her softening influence around, when the winds of night are rising, when the leaves are falling to the ground, when the western sky is tinged with emerald and gold, when the chirping of the birds has ceased, when bee and butterfly are at rest, when those sounds “we love so well” swell ever and anon on the ear.

It is sweet to join in the simple responses of the rustic villagers, to listen to their homely praise, to hear their beloved minister. Other fanes may be more gorgeously decorated, and resound with all the magnificence of song, yet is there a gentler peace enjoyed in this lowlier and humbler pile. And around us sleep those who once delighted to worship here, who brought their children to be baptized, who were married at yonder altar, who learnt the road to heaven from the same pulpit, and who received the last and holiest consolations of earth from its pastor. We seem shut out from the world ; it is but one family ; all know each other ; the concerns of each are the concerns of the whole ; the success of one is the success of all ; they are united by a deep and hallowed tie ; the ground, the church, the spiritual shepherd are their own.

And yet sweeter is the season spent, after the

services of the sanctuary, in the holy retreats of a happy home, when the family is gathered around their parents, and that most beautiful of compositions, Ken's Evening Hymn, is wafted to the courts above. To our mind there is nothing so well calculated to refine and expand the soul; the hour is softening beyond expression. The blazing fire, the healthy faces of the children, the complacent features of the long-affianced pair, the liquid notes of praise, the light thrown on the pictures, the warmth, the comfort, the snug security, and the autumnal winds without, exert a powerful influence; visions of purity and peace arise, "sweet as blue heavens o'er enchanted isles." The heart is full of love; every wish, every thought, every throb is steeped in tenderness. "We are disposed to press to our bosom every flower and every distant star, every lofty spirit of our divining—an embracing of all nature, as of our beloved." There is a boundless range; we become, as it were, the soul of the universe; we seem the centre of all existence, the concentration of all life; there are awakenings to a higher state, and energies before unknown.

It was in such a still and quiet Sabbath evening that we first lisped the name of Jesus; in such a calm and tranquil season that we first learned to know the Son of Mary, the Son of God. We well remember the room, with its homely furniture and old-fashioned organ. There it is, just as it stood of yore; the fire flings our shadows on the wall; the light is that which we sometimes most love—the dim, melancholy hue of evening. We talk of

the gentleness and meekness of Christ ; the tear rolls down the cheek as we think of his sorrows and his griefs ; our little bosom feels deep, deep pangs ; we would stand for him against the world ; we cling around our fond mother ; our heart gushes with tenderness towards her. The storm rages without ; the wind whistles through the trees ; the grey streaks of the setting sun reflect their sombre tinge on the floor ; we crowd around the hearth. Ere long the door opens, and our revered parent enters ; how soon the hours fly away ! many have been the scenes of holy love witnessed there. The remembrance comes over us as some delicious dream of the better land.

Some few of Grahame's minor poems are productions of exquisite beauty. What sweeter than this description of spring :—

Oh, how I love with melted soul to leave
The house of prayer, and wander in the fields
Alone ! What though the opening spring be chill !
What though the lark, checked in his airy path,
Eke out his song, perched on the fallow clod,
That still o'ertops the blade ! What though no branch
Have spread its foliage, save the willow wand,
That dips its pale leaves in the swollen stream !
What though the clouds oft lower ! their threats but end
In sunny showers, that scarcely fill the folds
Of moss-couched violet, or interrupt
The merle's dulcet pipe—melodious bird ;
He, hid behind the milk-white sloe-thorn spray,
Whose early flowers anticipate the leaf,
Welcomes the time of buds—the infant year.

After weeks and months of snow and storm,
after the bleak, bare aspect of the beautiful creation,

after howling and whistling of winds, after leafless trees and ice-bound brooks, with what throbbing emotions the heart hails the dawn of spring. Nature appears once more clothed in her pristine loveliness : the light transparent leaves, the budding of flowers, the peeping of the primrose in some shady lane, the fresh rippling of the waters, the serene blue skies, the cooling showers move strangely the soul. Every breeze resounds with the voice of bird ; the hill-tops are golden in the sunshine ; the valleys are lighted up with the radiant beams ; the sun peers above the horizon earlier—it sets later ; the genial rain descends ; the rainbow spans the heavens ; the earth is adorned with a greener tint ; there is a sound of revelry on the gale ; the soft and melting summer is on the wing ; the world blossoms every hour.

Speaking of the stillness of a summer's noon, our poet beautifully says :—

Delightful is this loneliness ; it calms
My heart : pleasant the cool beneath these elms
That throw across the stream a moveless shade :
Here Nature in her midnoon whisper speaks ;
How peaceful every sound.

What an exquisite sketch we have in these few lines !—the picture is complete : the shadows of the trees are on the waters ; the sun is up the heaven ; every sound is hushed ; the sky is one vast arch of blue ; the earth is one gem of purest green ; there is no hum of bee—no song of bird ; the luxury of eastern meditation steals over the soul ; existence seems to float in an enchanting

softness ; we feel as if we were in a new world ; the tumult of man is forgotten ; a serene quietude pervades every object ; the leaves move not ; the wind is dropped ; the imagination revels in fair and lovely creations of poet and of sculptor ; the mind is fascinated ; it is absorbed ; it has, as it were, ceased to breathe ; there is a dreamlike beauty ; the flowers stir not ; there is no ripple in the brook ; the stream flows onwards, but it flows imperceptibly.

The summer fades ; its gorgeousness and its magnificence are gone : the crown of autumn is dim and shadowy ; a grandeur sits on her brow ; our feelings are touched with a solemn awe ; our pulse beats slower ; our visions are of eternity ; our thoughts of the infinite existence ; the sweet scent of flowers comes no more upon the breeze ; the honeysuckle, the rose, and the violet are in the dust ; the foliage of dark forests has perished ; Death nips the fair face of creation. “A sad autumn-mist settles like a pall over the exhausted fields :” Earth becomes one “immeasurable grave-stone.” The black clouds roll over the sky ; they come sooner, they tarry later ; the winds moan and moan, as if the world was dying ; the leafless oak bends ; the sun sets in sullen and gloomy splendour ; solitude hastens on every moment ; the golden waving corn is gathered in ; the harvest-home has been celebrated :—

The ruddy haws
Now clothe the half-leaved thorn ; the bramble bends
Beneath its jetty load ; the hazel hangs,

With auburn branches, dipping in the stream,
That sweeps along, and threatens to o'erflow
The leaf-strewn banks.

Winter comes on with his crest of sheeted snow,
the sleet drives down, the rivers are frozen, the
leafless branches of the trees make wintry music :—

How dazzling white the snowy scene ! deep, deep
The stillness of the winter Sabbath day ;
Not even a footfall heard. Smooth are the fields,
Each hollow pathway level with the plain ;
Hid are the bushes, save that here and there
Are seen the topmost shoots of briar or broom.
High-ridged the whirl'd drift has almost reached
The powdered key-stone in the churchyard porch :
Mute hangs the hooded bell—the tombs lie buried—
No step approaches to the house of prayer.

The silence is almost vocal : the wintry scene is
before us ; we feel the biting air ; yonder stands the
church ; its very key-stone is white with the drifted
snow ; the tombs lie partly hidden ; no sound, no
foot-fall rises on the ear ; the sky is heavy with
large white flakes ; the sun is overshadowed ; it has
lost its golden beams, and has become dusky red.

Grahame's Biblical Pictures are very fine ; they
display much grandeur, combined with much sim-
plicity. We have room only for one : it is on the
words of our Saviour, when told that his " mother
and brethren were without, desiring to speak with
him :" —

" Who is my mother or my brethren ?"
He spake, and looked on them who sat around
With a meek smile of pity blent with love,
More melting than e'er gleamed from human face,
As when a sunbeam, through a summer shower,

Shines mildly on a little hill-side flock :
And with that look of love, he said, "Behold
My mother and my brethren : for I say,
That whosoe'er shall do the will of God,
He is my brother, sister, mother,—all!"

Grahame also published British Georgics, which, although possessing passages of great beauty, is somewhat dull and wearisome. His Sabbath, however, is an assemblage of exquisite sketches, displaying the skill of the artist with the warmth and feeling of the poet. It is a fine composition, and must hold a high place in the regard and love of every Christian. Many have been the seasons it has beguiled with its sweet descriptions ; and often again will its scenes arise before the mental eye, in times of distress and anguish, to soothe, exalt, and purify.

HAZLITT.

TROUBLE, yes, trouble will encircle thee, Companion. It will meet thee in every turn of life. Trouble, trouble shall cast its dark mazes around thy heart: no blessed dreams of beauty then, no sweet scented hope, no silver joy. The cold bleak clammy chill, as of death shall environ thee. It shall throw a melancholy gloom over the gentle stars of night: no "one eternal eventide of gems" then! There shall be confusion in the soft heavens, no liquid strain, no subtle hymn, no tone as of Memnon's lyre: ah no! trouble shall shut out the universe of God. One black pall over earth and sky; blackness deeper than Hades. No matter who thou art, oh child of clay, trouble will come upon thee: thou shalt awaken to a new world, and shalt find that world enshrouded in woe.

Thou mayst indeed dream sweetly away the long summer time; but trouble will grasp thine hand and shake thee out of sleep. The bright creation then all ebon night; no smile of tender love. But cheer thee, child, there is yet another world, and that is free from care and trial. No anxiety then, no trouble: all that will have been left behind: no shrinking of the flesh, no trembling of the spirit

to meet approaching woe : none, none in that dewy land ! No wishing that time might stay its flight ; that it might encircle thee for ever, settled, moveless ; engirt thee, nerveless, still, and wingless ; that circumstances might not change but remain as now, dismal as they are, yet remain lest worst come and swallow up the soul : ah no ! brother, into that quiet home trouble cannot enter. Bear thee up courageously : the stream is flowing onwards and soon the shore of the happy will be reached : then trouble for ever hence !

There are times, indeed, when light is in the heavens and glory streams from every object ; times, when the heart is not afraid, when it feels assured that the whole hemisphere will be as one living sapphire, brighter than the waters of the sea. In those moments, the soul fears not ; feels that within, which by God's grace, shall burn for ever. Sweet, delicious hope, would that it might last ! Yet no ; the spirit must struggle or else where would be the increase of its strength ? it must pass the night all solitary and alone, beneath the ebon ceiling, cheered only by the flickering glare of the beacon-fire, ere the beautiful dawn is seen gilding the mountain-tops, and shedding opal loveliness into the plains below. Ah, one seems, in certain seasons, like some Titanic being struggling with huge masses of blackness, and thick palpable clouds ; but then comes the pure still ether of eternity, and the calm unruffled quietude of serene repose.

This cannot continue long. Time's shadows and anxieties want some master-vision to light them

into beauty. We get entangled, and then cast down ; the whole existence seems enwrapped in strange, unearthly darkness. Would that it might discern the day ! but alas, no ; we must toil, toil on, trying to hew down some huge mountain that outshuts the clear, silvery heavens, and there is the sound of hammer and of axe, but no sound of joy, and no success, but the success of despair ; for the vast mount uprises in its immensity, and we toil, toil on, all lonely and all weeping. It is a mysterious pass for the soul to be brought to—a dim dark state, like “the valley of the shadow of death.” We dare not hope, for it would be mockery ; we dare not wish, for it would be blasphemy : we are desireless, and yet ever and anon we hear the songs, so liquid and so sweet, on the further side of the mountain, and ever and anon come the soft chime of blessedness and the realization of all beauty, and we look up, and again toil, toil on. Thus the spirit struggles onwards till the break of universal day, and the hymn of universal love, and the smile of universal peace, and the glory of universal happiness burst upon the entranced soul !

Thus doubtless did Hazlitt feel, and hadst thou been by him, he would thus have talked with thee. He knew the coldness of the world. He had to encounter the bitter scoffs of men. His golden dreams of youth were soon scattered, and he had to meet the sneers of those around. He could bear much, he did bear much, bear it manfully—but sometimes grief would overcome him, and his noble spirit felt broken.

We wish you, reader, to see his heart : much has been written on his intellect, and many have been the magnificent adoration-hymns. But we would notice rather his feelings and affections. We cannot tell why we would do this now ; but perchance our soul feels somewhat of those things he endured and suffered. We would therefore let the mind take its own course ; and you, Reader, may find some sweet melancholy pleasure in listening to the pulsations of this great man's bosom.

The clear taper-light shines upon us : every now and then the cinders fall, hollow-like, into the grate — a low melancholy sound. The night is lonely and even the stars look dreary. We have left colder work to talk with you and our own feelings. Soon perchance these walls will have been left by us, and another student will have followed. What will be his dreams ? Will he think as we have thought, of poets and poetry ? Then we shall be far away in some secluded cottage, rose-trailed, and encircled by green-clad hills. How different our studies then ; and how much brighter our fire, casting its flame upon the old-fashioned books, pictures, and busts. Even then all will be as quiet and as still as now ; but the world will have been entered upon ; and oftentimes shall we recall our college life, our dreaming the hours away, our musing on the lot of the noble and generous Hazlitt.

One fancies that he must have been thrilled with the wild and dreamy converse of Coleridge. Indeed his soul seems built up from childhood in beauty. How he loved painting, and how fondly, fervidly

did he talk of its principles in after life. If you want to read the eloquent on the art, read Hazlitt—essays which, says Hunt, “throw a light on art as from a painted window.” One loves to hear him breathe out his feelings and thoughts so exquisitely. And then his wanderings in the dim soft eventide of summer; how often does he speak of them in his works and his visits to “the romantic old family mansion of the St. Aubin’s.” What a full heart he would have in strolling onwards amid the stillness of nature between Wem and Shrewsbury, the blue mountains of Wales seen in the distance; and then what imaginings of the future! Golden light would radiate all things; the world would be naught save a temple of beauty leading to divine and delicious happiness.

Whoever has felt the heart throb, whoever has felt the brain swim with yearning fondness and confiding faith, will know what Hazlitt felt ere he entered upon life. How beautiful the dawn then, so full of silvery sweetness; but the dawn would change, and instead of hymning its praise, he would mourn its approach. Knowest thou that, Reader?

And then onwards in the world, his lectures, his publishing, the cool and contemptuous reception; how different from his youthful vision! But he will bear it still; one friend and another will come and throw sunlight upon his way.

But not always thus. There are moments when the heart must be alone; when it will dwell alone. No approach of man then; no tread of unhallowed

step. What melancholy reflections in looking on the days gone by ; contrasting the dream with the reality, his vestal visions with the awaking out of sleep. What a world to what he had expected ! He could one time have given his heart to all ; now he closes it even to himself. He will think, he will love alone. And yet not ever thus ; the heart will overcome ; and in overcoming will feel happy. He can forgive his enemies when they say glorious things ; forgive all the cruel scorn they had hurled at him ; forgive them and praise them. This was noble, this was generous ; the voice of a large heart !

Perhaps no passages in his works are so touching as those which refer to himself. And indeed with every great author this is the case. How deeply striking are these openings up in Carlyle, how tenderly touching in Richter. But far sweeter in Cowper. How beautifully he tells over his trials ! None half so exquisitely. How sad the music of his tongue and yet how delicious ; it is like angels' language ; it is like the soft silvery minstrelsy of the stars or the vesper chime, a low chaunt of spiritual sounds, a murmur as of early dawn or dewy eve. And how enchanting are Bowles' reminiscences of childhood and youth ! they flow as a placid stream. The hum of bee ? it is not so mellifluous ! Reader, cling to this Isle of Beauty amid the confusion of the world ; it will heal and soothe thee. Hast thou ever seen a bird sitting on a sweet green branch, with its wings all wetted by the shower, singing so softly in the re-

turning sunshine? He forgets the storm, or if he remembers, it is but to gild the golden beams which have broken from yonder cloud with a more charming grace. So thou bathe ever in the thought of bygone years; recall those gushing affections which were thine in those quiet days. Thou wast happy then; be happy now! Forlorn and desolate art thou? then lift thine eye above; a land of tenderness is there, and of the spirit's holiest play. It is not a meagre, void, and empty clime, but the orange-tree grows, and the majestic cedar, and beneath its fair and far-branching trees stretch the homes of faith and purity. Its intelligences love; and no more separations; no more farewell kisses and tearful embraces; no more deep bursting sobs; no more stifled agony; no more gazing on the receding land until its dark and dim coast sinks away into the surrounding night; no more dismal splash of waters bearing thee away from all thy heart holds dear; ah, no more farewells, but bright sunny rapturous joy! Wilt thou gain that Isle of Beauty? Worship the meek and gentle Jesus; deeper and richer glory shall break on thy soul and melody. Thou hast, perchance, stood by the side of thine Own, in some evening's hallowed twilight, and she hath sung thee a song of the better land, and its music hath thrilled thy being; even such shall the song be, but far more delicious: and thou shalt meet thy parents, and thy children, and all whom thou hast loved; and in the calm sunset of heaven thou shalt recall the days of infancy and youth, and pointing to this beauteous earth, rolling

along the azure expanse, shall thine heart throb with unspeakable bliss ; that bliss shall be holy. Seest thou that gentle flower, uprearing its lovely petals to the morning's breath ? So shalt thou be looking upwards and drawing thy life, thy happiness from the Invisible. Love Christ ; he is thy brother, kinsman, God ! Live, live ; and thou shalt scent the odoriferous flowers of paradise, with angels and thine own beloved ones !

And thus does Hazlitt at times open up his heart. In general he keeps strictly to the subject on which he dilates ; but now and then we get an insight into his bosom : we behold the man. Indeed to us now no passages are so full of simple beauty as these of which we are speaking, none so powerful to win us away from the world to gaze into the eye of Hazlitt, and to grasp his warm hand in tenderest sympathy. He will tell you of his wanderings in the woods of Norman Court ; he will breathe out his painful recollections, and you, reader, shall be subdued :—

Ye woods that crown the clear lone brow of Norman Court, why do I revisit ye so oft, and feel a soothing consciousness of your presence, but that your high tops waving in the wind recall to me the hours and years that are for ever fled, that ye renew in ceaseless murmurs the story of long-cherished hopes and bitter disappointment, that in your solitudes and tangled wilds I can wander and lose myself as I wander on, and am lost in the solitude of my own heart ; and that, as your rustling branches give the loud blast to the waste below—borne on the thoughts of other years, I can look down with patient anguish at the cheerless desolation which I feel within ! Without that face pale as the primrose with hyacinthine locks, for ever shunning and for ever haunting me, mocking my waking

thoughts as in a dream, without that smile which my heart could never turn to scorn, without those eyes dark with their own lustre, still bent on mine, and drawing the soul into their liquid mazes like a sea of love, without that name trembling in fancy's ear, without that form gliding before me like Oread or Dryad in fabled groves, what should I do, how pass away the listless leaden-footed hours? Then wave, wave on, ye woods of Tuderley, and lift your high tops in the air: my sighs and vows uttered by your mystic voice breathe into me my former being, and enable me to bear the thing I am !

Poor Hazlitt, one cannot but feel for him. One loves the name of Norman Court; and fancies the wood is not far distant from us, and yet far, far away from the world. We seem to wander amid the dim paths; and while we listen to the fitful breeze, our soul is seized by melancholy thoughts. The heart is full to bursting. The pensive evening sinks into dismal night; and the trees look so sombre and full of gloom. Hours that are past, how gaze ye into this present season! Poor Hazlitt, we shall never forget the woods of Tuderley; and whenever that name is sounded, thy sorrows will breathe themselves into our bosom.

One had not thought his heart so deep and gushing; and yet we seem to behold even more of this when he speaks of his lost child:—

I have never seen death but once, and that was in an infant. It is years ago. The look was calm and placid, and the face was fair and firm. It was as if a waxen image had been laid out in the coffin, and strewed with innocent flowers. It was not like death, but more like an image of life! No breath moved the lips, no pulse stirred, no sight or sound would enter those eyes or ears more. I looked at it, I saw no pain was there; it seemed to smile at the short pang of life which was over: but I could not bear the coffin-lid to be closed—it

seemed to stifle me ; and still as the nettles wave in a corner of the churchyard over his little grave, the welcome breeze helps to refresh me, and ease the tightness of my breast.

Thus wrecked were his hopes and delicious dreams. There is a touching plaint in his language. His voice is melancholy ; his eye is dimmed with sorrow. No high flash now ! That has passed : gone into the shade of years. How he kindled at the sound of triumphant liberty, sitting enthroned on the world's empire, and peace and plenty flowing over isles and continents ! Then “the immortal light, all young and joyful, million-orbed, million-coloured, will beam over the universe as at the first morning.” So deemed his ardent and glowing faith ; but even these visions were scattered : had they not been so, we perhaps had never heard some of his fullest and deepest breathings : all passed away, his visions and gentle slumberings. Yea, the creations beautiful and bright, the melodies like “some snow-light cadences melting to silence, when upon the breeze some holy bard lets fall an anthem sweet to cheer itself to Delphi,” the magnificent bursts of song, the sky with her myriad stars breathing her sylph-like tones, the silence of deserts and lofty mountains, more exquisite than the subtle witchery of an evening hymn, the undefined thrill of delicious emotions trembling through the whole being, a sort of rich, throbbing, musical feeling, as though the entire existence were one heart, the passionate love of painting, the worship of the world's Scourge, the tossings and throes of his bosom, all, all passed with him : all, all. Not

one remained. And then well might he weep to find instead of these, the scoff, the taunt, the indifferent reception. Oh, he had rather turned back to that sweet day, when he was at All-Foxden ; that day “when Wordsworth, looking out of the low latticed window said, ‘how beautifully the sun sets on that yellow bank !’ ” than tread onwards to the future, lonely and broken-hearted.

BISHOP HEBER.

To contemplate Heber, either in the character of a Christian Bishop or a sacred poet, must ever be a pleasing task. With the bard alone we have at present to do ; and the very morn on which we write seems to partake much of the gentleness and quiet beauty of his poetry. His strains do not madden the brain, flush the cheek, and quicken the throbings of the heart ; but they breathe a softness and gentleness quite their own. It has been one of our sweetest enjoyments to listen to the melody of his voice, and the mild yet elegant language of his lips. We love to suit the time of reading a favourite author with the distinguishing features of his productions ; thus we read Coleridge when the heavens are serene, and the world seems to lie in dreaminess ; Cowper, when the winter covers the landscape with snow, and makes us feel a deeper and higher delight in the comfort of an English fireside ; and Heber, when a beautiful dawn streaks the horizon with the light of a summer's day. The fair, enchanting loveliness of creation expands the soul, gives it a richer tone, draws out the feelings, lets loose the imagination, wraps into a forgetfulness of every-day existence,

brightens, radiates, ethercalizes the fancy, opens up resplendent visions, fits the spirit to enter fully into the liquid harmonies of the poet.

In Heber's poems, piety shines pre-eminent. They are alike suited to the sunny day of success and the dark hour of adversity. Nor are we less pleased with their elegance; they are chaste and exquisite. What can be more beautiful than this?

By cool Siloam's shady rill
How sweet the lily grows :
How sweet the breath beneath the hill
Of Sharon's dewy rose.

Lo ! such the child whose early feet
The paths of peace have trod ;
Whose secret heart, with influence sweet,
Is upward drawn to God.

By cool Siloam's shady rill
The lily must decay :
The rose that blooms beneath the hill
Must shortly fade away.

And soon, too soon, the wintry hour
Of man's maturer age,
Will shake the soul with sorrow's power,
And stormy passion's rage.

O Thou, whose infant feet were found
Within thy Father's shrine,
Whose years with changeless virtue crowned
Were all alike divine :

Dependent on Thy bounteous breath,
We seek Thy grace alone ;
In childhood, manhood, age, and death,
To keep us still thine own.

There is a sweetness and a melting music about these verses which we cannot well describe; enough, however, that they cheer the troubled breast with

the melody of immortal hope.' There is a strange spell in reading true poetry. However simple the subject, let but the bard touch it, and immediately it is vital with interest and beauty. Poetry is the language of man's pristine state; the language of angels; the language of the Divinity: its intonations are everlasting, its harmonies imperishable. The purer and the holier we become, the deeper will be our love for its sublime teachings. None ever listened to its grandeur of song without sighing for immortality, without feeling that the spirit is eternal, without wishing for something more hallowed than aught on earth, without making resolves of future good, without sending the thoughts far out into the infinite expanse of existence, without creating scenes of quiet, undisturbed and unruffled bliss. Every vibration of its chords is as the sweep of the hurricane, yet gentle as the soft cooing of the ring-dove. We cannot hear its lofty minstrelsy without beholding the beauty of flower, field, and tree, without seeing additional loveliness in the gambols of childhood, the blush of first affection, the fond clinging of true-hearted attachment, the bended knee, the meek devotion of a child of God; without thirsting more intensely after a fairer and sunnier clime, and a happier and better home. Sculpture and architecture and painting produce the same effect. We do not say that they influence man always to put into practice what they inspire; that must come from a far higher and Diviner power; but they ever stir his bosom with thrilling

and beautiful emotions—they ever tend to that which is good and lovely.

Heber is chiefly known by his prize poem of Palestine. It displays both learning and elegance, but little or no originality; for chasteness of expression and beauty of design it has, perhaps, few equals. This, on the restoration of the Jews to favour, is very harmonious:—

Lo! cherub hands the golden courts prepare,
Lo! thrones arise, and every saint is there;
Earth's utmost bounds confess their awful sway,
The mountains worship and the isles obey;
Nor sun nor moon they need—nor day, nor night;
God is their temple, and the Lamb their light:
And shall not Israel's sons exulting come,
Hail the glad beam, and claim their ancient home?
On David's throne shall David's offspring reign,
And the dry bones be warm with life again.
Hark! white-robed crowds their deep hozannas raise,
And the hoarse flood repeats the sound of praise;
Ten thousand harps attune the mystic song,
Ten thousand thousand saints the strain prolong:
“Worthy the Lamb! omnipotent to save,
Who died, who lives, triumphant o'er the grave.”

Though there is much beauty in these lines, there is little of the deep, thrilling outbreak of the poet—no gigantic mass of sound seizing the very soul; the tremendous roll of music sweeps not onwards from Heber's lyre, it is a soft and liquid warble. The versification of this production is melodious, but the bard moves us not; the heart is untouched, though the ear is continually pleased. There is, however, more poetry and originality in

the following, from his fragment of the World before the Flood :—

There came a spirit down at eventide
To the city of Enoch, and the terraced height
Of Jared's palace. On his turret top
There Jared sate, the king with lifted face,
And eyes intent on Heaven, whose sober light
Slept on his ample forehead, and the locks
Of crissed silver, beautiful in age,
And—but that pride had dimmed, and lust of war,
Those reverend features with a darker shade—
Of saintly seeming,—yet no saintly mood ;
No heavenward musing fixed that steadfast eye,
God's enemy, and tyrant of mankind.

Nor is the description of his daughter Ada less beautiful :—

Forth with all her damsels, Ada came,
As mid the stars the silver-mantled moon,
In stature thus and form pre-eminent,
Fairest of mortal maids. Her father saw
That perfect comeliness, and his proud heart
In purer bliss expanded. Long he gazed,
Nor wonder deemed that such should win the love
Of genius or of angel ; such the cheek,
Glossy with purple youth ; such the large eye,
Whose broad, black mirror, through its silken fringe,
Glistened with softer brightness, as a star
That nightly twinkles o'er a mountain well ;
Such the long locks, whose raven mantle fell
Athwart her ivory shoulders, and o'erspread
Down to the heel her raiment's filmy fold.

But our poet's greatest excellence lay in his hymns : his mind, habits, and tastes were peculiarly adapted for this kind of composition ; every one he has written is characteristic of the meek and gentle Heber. How beautiful is this on the

soul-soothing and soul-elevating philosophy of our Divine Redeemer :—

Lo, the lilies of the field,
How their leaves instruction yield !
Hark to Nature's lesson given.
By the blessed birds of heaven !
Every bush and tufted tree
Warbles sweet philosophy :
“ Mortal, fly from doubt and sorrow ;
God provideth for the morrow !

“ Say, with richer crimson glows
The kingly mantle than the rose ?
Say, have kings more wholesome fare
Than we poor citizens of air ?
Barns nor hoarded grain have we,
Yet we carol merrily.
Mortal, fly from doubt and sorrow ;
God provideth for the morrow !

“ One there lives, whose guardian eye
Guides our humble destiny :
One there lives, who, Lord of all,
Keeps our feathers, lest they fall :
Pass we blithely, then, the time,
Fearless of the snare and lime,
Free from doubt and faithless sorrow ;
God provideth for the morrow ! ”

This is really music of heavenly tone and touch ; what fulness of richest and deepest consolation is there in such a truth !—the fact itself is poetry ; it is the gigantic and sublime principle which entwines the universe ; its light is the light of paradise—its melody the melody of Eden. Fallen humanity deemed not thus of its Almighty Creator ; at times, indeed, the verity, in all its grandeur, broke in upon the soul of the heathen philosopher ; but it was soon obscured, and clouded, and dark-

ened by mistrust ; the day-glory tarried not long—it only came for a little hour—it died as soon as born ; it was too high and lofty a doctrine—it was too magnificent for their notion of God—it ill agreed with his other qualities and attributes ; it gave a radiance, but it was a radiance on a chaos—all was confusion—nothing was certain—nothing settled. But Christ came ; he propounded the law of the better land—he opened up the heart, as it were, of the Divinity ; the government of the throne was revealed—its secrets made known ; and such was the beauty and sweetness in the language of his lips, that his enemies declared, “Never man spake like this.”

Perhaps one of Heber’s most powerful hymns is the following :—

From Greenland’s icy mountains,
From India’s coral strand,
Where Afric’s sunny fountains
Roll down their golden sand—
From many an ancient river,
From many a palmy plain,
They call us to deliver
Their land from error’s chain.

What though the spicy breezes
Blow soft on Ceylon’s isle,
Though ev’ry prospect pleases,
And only man is vile—
In vain, with lavish kindness,
The gifts of God are strewn,
The heathen, in his blindness,
Bows down to wood and stone.

Can we, whose souls are lighted
With wisdom from on high—
Can we to men benighted
The lamp of life deny ?

Salvation ! oh, salvation !
The joyful sound proclaim,
Till each remotest nation
Hath learnt Messiah's name.

Waft, waft, ye winds, his story ;
And you, ye waters, roll,
Till, like a sea of glory,
It spreads from pole to pole ;
Till o'er our ransomed nature
The Lamb for sinners slain,
Redeemer, King, Creator,
In bliss returns to reign !

With men missions are despised, and the character they form is derided as mean and paltry ; they seem incapable of distinguishing what is truly great. The world, the golden, glittering, sparkling world, is followed and worshipped and adored ; but a day is coming, a day of sullen darkness, when all its brilliancy will depart and the hideousness of its seducing power be revealed ; its drapery of scarlet, and purple, and fine linen will be stripped ; no more sweetly-scented odours—there will be loathsomeness, rottenness, and putrifying stench ; custom and fashion will loose their potent spell ; the syrens' voice will enchant no longer ; and that which has been termed good, and noble, and manly, and which poets have hymned, and philosophers have lauded, and moralists have praised, and on which has shone the eye of beauty, and wealth, and genius, and upon which have been lavished immortal spirits, and which has been wreathed around with flowery laurels, and scented with earth's richest perfumes, and adorned with earth's comeliest titles, will then be seen naught save a

magnificent phasm, leading humanity downwards to the deep, dark dungeon of eternal woe.

But these semblance-worshippers sport themselves with one of the purest developments of the religion of Jesus, and deem it the effect of madness and fanaticism. Madness, folly, to heal the dying, and cleanse the unholy?—madness, folly, to visit the forgotten and outcast of earth's sons, and to tell them that, amid all their depravity, and amid all their impurity, and amid all their degradation, there is a star arisen in the world's horizon, upon which, if any one may gaze, it will pour forth such liquid melodies, that the obdurest heart will melt, and the sternest sinner seek forgiveness?—madness, folly, to tell them that there flows from Calvary a stream, wherein if a man plunge, he shall be “whiter than snow,” and that there issues from Calvary’s cross a mellowed light, wherein if a man bathe, he shall become divested of every taint and every spot?—madness, folly, to go to the benighted heathen who worships some idol of his own workmanship, and who sacrifices at its shrine those nearest and dearest to his heart, and to tell him that there is One above who hath made perfect atonement, and that in the “blood shed” there is free and everlasting pardon?—to go to the beclouded pagan, who stands on the shore of the boundless sea, and then, listening to the waves dashing their music on the rocky coast, kneels to the magnificent orb of day rising above the level of the ocean, and to tell him that there is something mightier, and greater, and more gigantic than the

sun, to which he renders so much homage, and that this Being has wound his love around the world, that that world might be knitted to him for ever? —to go to the wild son of Ishmael, and as he stands bare-footed and bare-headed beneath the midnight sky, and gazes upwards on the starry immensity breathing its sweet, soft hymn, and whilst awed by the still silence and the profound solitudes of the arid desert, he bends lowly to the vast material universe as to his living god, to tell him that there is One whose lineaments of beauty are far more exquisite, and whose features of majesty are far more glorious, and whose attributes of grandeur are far more divine; and that this stupendous universe, on which he leans as on the Supreme, is but the “goings forth” of this Holy and this Highest, and that there is a communion yet more elevating and soul-enkindling, and a worship yet more hallowed and spirit-blessing, and a service yet more exalted and heart-freeing!

We will tell these lofty beings what it is that missions do. In the place of darkness, they shed the full beauty of immortal day; in the stead of death, they put life; they find the man lower sunk than “the beast which perisheth,” and they exalt him to throneship with the Everlasting; they find him going down to the grave without one bright hope, and they strike out the hymn of an imperishable existence; for corruption, they give health; for pollution, purity: they find homes girt around with wretchedness, and within full of misery, and they cast thereon the hallowed beams of blessed-

ness, and love, and peace ; and in the desert, where once prowled the savage, is seen the tapering spire pointing heavenwards, and often on the wind comes the silvery chime of its chapel-bell ; and in the place of adultery and uncleanness do they give chastity and holiness ; and in cities do they make good subjects and loyal people ; and in kingdoms do they establish the throne, and teach him that sitteth thereon to rule righteously ; and over the whole world do they throw a calm, unruffled repose and ripening plenty.

Thus missions regenerate the world ; and what sacrifice is like to one who, for the redemption of the roaming savage, forsakes the land of his fathers, with its thousand memories and its thousand sweets, and bidding adieu to kinsmen whose faces were as the light of heaven, and whose love as deep as a river, and whose kindness made the years pass as one short sunny hour, betakes himself far off amid strangers and amid foes, to labour till his death-hour for the renovation of immortal spirits ? De ride it as they may, sport with it as they will, the missionary character is essentially and truly great ; it approaches nearest to the Eternal's ; it bears his impress most deeply ; its voice is the voice of the Divinity ; its master-principle is the principle that governs him ; it is man's highest dignity, man's loftiest bearing.

How exulting the song for Easter-day ; enthusiasm is in its every note :—

God is gone up with a merry noise
Of saints that sing on high ;

With his own right hand and his holy arm
He hath won the victory !

Now empty are the courts of Death,
And crushed thy sting, Despair ;
And roses bloom in the desert tomb,
For Jesus hath been there !

And he hath tamed the strength of hell,
And dragged him through the sky,
And captive behind his chariot-wheel
He hath bound captivity.

God is gone up with a merry noise
Of saints that sing on high ;
With his own right hand and his holy arm
He hath won the victory !

A fit hymn for the hour of the church's triumph—it is one of joy. Blackness and gloom were the clouds that before had bedimmed the tomb ; there was no life, there was no hope ; the cypress and the yew moaned beside the grave ; there were sounds of lamentation—sounds of woe ; the agonizing moment—so heart-rending, so heart-bursting, so heart-stifling—was without one cheering anticipation of meeting again. Ah, those deep, deep, heavy gigantic wails were without one consoling assurance !—the parting of husband and of wife, of child and mother, was without one cheering ray ; the tearing, breaking, convulsive, forcing away was without one beam of comfort ; the last glance of the eye, the last language of the lips, the last pressure of the hand, the last—it was all the last : a separation, a disunion, annihilation, or worse, for ever ;—no more to gaze on each other, no more to greet with fondest love, no more kind and gentle services, no more vows of unchanging attachment,

no more prattle of babe, no more tenderness, no more love, no more life! What partings, then ; what adieu—what farewells ! But henceforth there was light ; immortality sprang up and everlasting peace ; the dying man heard the imperishable notes, caught the divine music ; his heart moved with happiness, throbbed with bliss ; his countenance shone with brightness, was radiated with glory ; the room, the awful, terrible room of death became the antechamber of heaven ; the viol and the harp were there ; ever and anon would come the harmonies of the invisible world, and the scents of that sweet clime ; there were breathings of deepest hope ; angels came and tarried : and He, The Morning Star, stood up the sky, and pointed to a land where there is everlasting reunion, and everlasting love.

Such strains as Heber's are suited to the worship of the Everlasting One ; they become the lips of the renewed man ; they express the feelings of the humble but believing heart ; the truths of the sky are sung to an earthly lyre ; we listen to their consoling and divine music ; happiness then takes possession of the soul, a gentle soothing peace, the spirit. The hymn is eternal : it rises now, it will rise for ever—it is immortal and imperishable ; as ages roll on, it will deepen in its intonations ; it will become grander and more sublime. We already feel its kindling, growing power. We awaken to its dignity and gigantic influence. Bear us on thy breast, O song, to that world of love !

JOHN A. HERAUD.

WONDROUS these days to the subtle spirit : days girt round with marvel ; days gemmed with beauty ; days edged with the opal loveliness of dawn ; dawn opening into some orient clime, bathing nature in delicious light, and pointing onwards to the holiest in heaven. Wondrous days are these ; days of deep marvel. Sky-tints on all ; sapphire-fringed the universe.

How opens the world on the spirit, opens in blushing sweetness to enamour and win for ever to itself ; beautiful indeed the earth, and beautiful indeed man's soul ! Something exquisitely tuned to hymn of God ; to hymn of purity and peace !

Deep, deep the heart ; deep, deep its thoughts ; deeper still its love.

So breaks the dawn, and we wonder how the twinkling gems of heaven sink into pure unsullied light : all passed away, rolled up as a scroll, those million burning watchers, rolled up till even.

And these have awakened a lofty spirit to breathe out his magnificent song ; have enkindled all the highest feelings of his heart into a holy flame of tenderness and truth.

Sweet the dawn comes on through the wide

heaven-portals, and to that dawn is turned the deep-seeing eye of a wondrous man, looking far down into its snowy whiteness, and praying for the holiest.

Sweet the evening steals away with crimson and with gold. Sweet quietude on ocean's wave and gentle purling rill. So sinks the sun beneath the western tide ; sinks in hallowed twilight ; unruffled and exquisitely serene. And as he sinks, that eye, deep-wondering, watches and watches still, adoration bent. Down sinks the sun, and that eye intensely looks ; intensely and yet more intensely, till the last gleam fades from the dark sea-bosom, then lifts its light above on the quenchless stars, and prays for inspiration.

Day after day, and night after night, that eye doth gaze : risen morn and beautiful eve pass on and on, and no dimness there, deep and deeper still the prophetic meaning and the fervid prayer..

The universe, ah, no ! can never give thee what thou seekest, Poet ! The universe of God is mute to prayer like thine, mute, mute. So higher look ; look through creation to her Lord.

Rose sweet smelling on yon latticed porch is but what the universe itself is to God—the scent of that essence supreme. There fix thine eye !

Dawn, dawn, beautiful dawn awakes again, but in his chamber lonely kneels the spirit to its God : nature mute : the spirit mute : all round the presence of the Holy. Silence on the soul when the Creator speaks.

Light now and life ! light sweeter far than dawn,

and life fairer than calmest eve ; light and life, they are given and thy heart is happy.

How beautiful is light in the dwellings of the righteous ! Fairer then than spirit ever dreamed in loveliest vision ; fairer, so fair, so sweet, so beautiful, the daughter of the sky !

Who listened there,
 Had heard the mother prattling to the children
 Tales of their father, and low breathed numbers,
 Like the sequestered stock-dove's brooding murmur,
 Full of maternal tenderness—the burthen,
 The gladness of that sire's return at even,
 When he should take the sweet boy from her bosom,
 Or on his daughter's head let fall the tear,
 The purest that can fall from human eye ;
 While, quiet in her bliss, she should await
 The sweet embrace ; and after, on his breast
 Reclined, from his meek lips receive account
 What knowledge, wisdom, truth, the sons of God
 Had won from large discourse on loftiest themes,
 Or by the elders of the brethren taught,
 Or from angelic ministers derived.
 Anon the sun went down ; their hearts first bowed
 In worship pure, then folded each to each,
 In calm repose ; the stars watched o'er them.

Beautiful, most beautiful, the vale in which these beings dwell ; beautiful indeed !

Sweet is the twilight eve in Armon's vale,
 Sweet, lovely, tranquil, sometimes darkly throned,
 And oft resplendent ; soft the western wind,
 Floating white clouds through silent depths of blue,
 O'er hills and haunts secluded, where the voice
 Of waters murmurs with the bleat of lambs.

Fair o'er the vale of Armon walks the moon
 In brightness, and on flowers, and streams, and hills,
 Flings beauteous radiance from her ample orb,

Streaking with silver lines the swarthy night—
Till grey with age, herself foreshew her death ;
The resurrection of another day,
As yet but hoped for ; like a coming joy,
Subsisting in desire ; as do the souls
In Hades, till with risen flesh reclothed.

So the poet's prayer is heard in heaven, and utterance deep-toned is given.

Dawn now the visions of the soul, glimpses of beauty never to fade : gleams, ruby tinted, as of the sun's western course : but living, speaking to man's heart.

Time rolls backward ; the dial of Ahaz moves wonder in the heart of prince and people ; backwards still, deeper and deeper into forgotten years, till Time is fresh and young, with the dews of morn upon her, and the grass all beautiful and green.

No rainbow in the heaven now ; no exquisite play of mysterious colours. Broad sky of blue ; deep sapphire sea, calm, undisturbed, serene.

Quiet the universe around ; the garment of the Infinite ; quiet all and beautiful ; too beautiful for the spirit to look upon ; fair as virgin dawn.

Beautiful the earth, and beautiful the trees, and beautiful the glassy lake ; most beautiful and sweet. Beautiful the lily and the rose ; and beautiful morn and eve, with their hymns of peace and joy.

But otherwise is man : deep sunk in guilt is he, deep and deeper every hour. Pollution stains his soul ; corruption defiles the inner thought. His breath the breath of sin and hate : sin unrepented of, and hate most highly prized.

And the daughters of men are wanton, and their eyes “are flame.” No hallowed altar in the heart ; no sinless desire there, unholy all and past forgiveness !

Beautiful the earth, and beautiful the heaven ; but deformed is man, deformed and cursed. Mercy gleams in every star of night, mercy, silver-toned and blessed ! But this avails not ; wanton and guilty, the race seeks pleasure in the Evil-Throned.

Blood-stained the earth ; blood on the morn and blood on golden eve. No worship of the Holiest ; worship of the Cursed !

So rolls the universe in beauty and in quietude ; rolls round the mighty centre of existence ; rolls in grandeur and delicious sweetness. And so rolls on the race of man, blood-spotted, wanton, and godless !

Amid the shepherd-tended vales, one voice is heard hymning the praise of the Eternal. Sweet that voice arises ; sweet and sweeter still.

Twinkle out the stars, and that voice ascends ; and again when they “sink away into the light of heaven” is it heard. Beautiful is that amid the beautiful of creation.

That voice is the voice of the world’s second sire, praying to his God.

Then the faithful one is missioned to the pleasure-seekers and the wanton-worshippers. But they spurn him and his message, and return again to their unhallowed mirth. Vengeance is preparing ; vengeance from the Lord !

Beautiful is earth, and beautiful is heaven ; beautiful the lapse of stream, and beautiful the low green copse ; but deformed is man, deformed, deformed ! On the world a spot of deep blood-guiltiness ; a spot for waters "of the great deep" alone to wash away.

The glorious waters ! waters beautiful and bright, the glancing, heaving, musical waters ! even these must roll on limitless, and baptize the earth of all her wanton race ; nay not baptize, but sweep them to their judgment.

So the waters roll, and man is not. Again the poet lowlier knelt and prayed :—

Omniscient Spirit, seer of the past !
Rend, rend the veil ; unblasted, let me look
Into the Holiest ! on that dial's front,
Whose hours are ages, bid the sun return,
That I may read their history aloud !
Disperse the mist from ocean's monstrous face,
And purge my sight, that I may see beyond !

So utterance, deep-burning, broke from the suppliant's lips and prevailed with God : and the Judgment of the Flood was visioned in characters of fire.

Poet, this homage-hymn to thee ; but the holier one to God !

T. K. HERVEY.

THIS author has published but little poetry—that little, however, is marked by much grace and beauty—a melancholy grace—a melancholy beauty. He seems to hold the same views of human life so common to young poets after their first fond hopes have been dashed to the ground: he deems the past sweeter than the present; he talks of the sunny joys of childhood, and the sad realities of manhood. Friends that promised truth, have forsaken him, become cool, sleep in the silent tomb. The eye that once gazed with all the tenderness of parental love is dimmed, and the knee on which he sat, and the bosom on which he leaned, are quiet in the grave. Cares and anxieties cloud the present; disappointments and shattered anticipations darken the future.

Seest thou, O reader, yonder bee on those sweet-scented and rose-tinctured flowers, golden with the morning sun? It is the emblem of childhood.

We own that there is something peculiarly pleasing in retrospection, in recalling the face of friend and kin, in turning over the letters which threw sunlight on many a day, in breathing again the vital air of infancy and youth, in witnessing those

scenes where we so often gambolled, in remembering our infant prayers, our mother's fondness, our father's tenderness, our little hymns, our playmates, our delicious hopes. But our maturer judgment tells us that they were not our happiest days. We had sorrow and trouble then ; we had as much as we could bear. Our romantic schemes may have failed ; our ardent expectations may have been disappointed ; friends may have departed to "the land where all things are forgotten," and men may have treated us with unkindness and cruelty ; but even these have not been able to blight the hallowed bliss of the present hour.

Childhood ! when we lisped fondly a mother's name, and when we gazed earnestly into her fair and beautiful countenance—childhood ! when our young heart bubbled up to every new delight, and when it danced to the soft prattle of our own lips —childhood ! when we clung around the neck of those we loved, and told them all our griefs and all our joys, and when we knelt in simplicity and artlessness beside the hearth at morning and at evening, and offered up our infant prayers—childhood ! when the heroic deed, and the noble action, and the hardy achievement blushed our cheek with rapture and high resolve, and when the summer brought the visits of kinsmen who gladdened our home with their gentle faces—childhood ! when we gave all our heart to sympathize with the distressed, and cheerfully parted with our little wealth to feed the sons of want, and when our bosom gushed with affection at every kindness and every

service—childhood ! when the thought was written on the brow, when we broke from all restraint, and wandered down some wild lane to see how the violet and the primrose grew, and when the singing of birds, and the hum of bees, and the waving grass thrilled us with ecstacy—childhood ! when we gazed on the beautiful rainbow and the beautiful heavens, and fancied them not far from earth, and looking onwards through some opening wood, imagined that we should soon reach them ; and when the silvery moon shone in at our window-pane, and appeared as some radiant lamp to light creation with ; and when the million stars rolled over the immense expanse, breathing divinest music.—childhood ! when we dreamt of cloudless skies, and fadeless flowers, and fondest friends, and hallowed retreats, and eternal truth, and everlasting love, and imperishable, inextinguishable bliss.

But childhood, with all its felicity, and dreaming loveliness, and charming sweets, was but a prelude to more delicious joy. Thought awoke, and dawned ; truth beamed brightly in the horizon ; nature became clothed with deeper associations ; the stars became more than stars, and the flowers more than flowers ; they were the language of the Divinity ; their intonations, how beautiful and majestic !—it was angelic music—silence and yet melody : no sounds issued from those twinkling points, and yet came sublimest strains. We gazed upon the clear heavens one evening ; all was still, and yet there swelled forth such a mighty gush of song as enthralled the immortal within. Nature in

all its forms and changes—the wild sweep of autumnal winds, the magnificent sunset, the rushing of the storm—winter, with its leafless trees, and falling snow, and driving sleet—spring, with its primrose starting up from some mossy bank, and refreshing breezes, and bracing air, and cooling showers—summer, with its luxuriant foliage, and cloudless skies, and noon tide heats, and balmy evenings, and revelry of delights—was to us full of the softest and most harmonious cadences. There were liquid voices everywhere; they pervaded all existence. These broke in upon us, and imperishable affection and everlasting faith and indissoluble union. We felt that we were in a world of beauty; we knew that it was ours, its wealth, and treasures, and resources, and creations were our own. They interpreted Jehovah's parental care and regard. Thought became linked with each sparkling orb, and with each petal of the modest flower.

Well might we be happy; and we were happy! We knelt in this vast temple, and prayed to become like the meek and lowly Jesus; we prayed for holiness: peace ever hovers over the bended knee and bended heart; it hovered over us.

Nature then was beautiful; it is more beautiful now: the brook, as it purled through some leafy wood, was sweet then; it is sweeter now. Associations of the past, and hallowed memories, and deep thoughts cling around every object. The sun, as it sunk so gorgeously behind the hills, was magnificent then; it is more magnificent now: the ocean, with its billowy waves, was sublime then; it

is sublimer now. With the growth of moral and intellectual being, the visible creation has become invested with a fairer loveliness and a deeper glory. The universe, with its myriad stars, and rolling, surging waters, and fine outstretched landscapes, and lofty mountains, has become a symbol of something higher, mightier, and more ethereal.

But we turn back to childhood and our poet. How exquisite is this :—

Dry up thy tears, love !—I fain would be gay !
 Sing me the song of my early day !
 Give me the music, so witchingly wild,
 That solaced my sorrows when I was a child !—
 Years have gone by me, both lonely and long,
 Since my spirit was soothed by thy voice in that song !

Years have gone by !—and life's lowlands are past,
 And I stand on the hill which I sighed for, at last :
 But I turn from the summit that once was my star,
 To the vale of my childhood, seen dimly and far ;—
 Each blight on its beauty seems softened and gone,
 Like a land that we love, in the light of the morn !

There are the flowers that have withered away,
 And the hopes that have faded, like fairies at play ;
 And the eyes that are dimmed, and the smiles that are gone,
 And thou, too, art there !—but thou still art mine own ;
 Fair as in childhood, and fond as in youth,
 Thou, only thou, wert a spirit of truth !

Time hath been o'er thee, and darkened thine eye,
 And thoughts are within thee more holy and high ;
 Sadder thy smile than in days that are o'er,
 And lovelier all that was lovely before ;
 That which thou wert is not that which thou art,
 Thou too art altered in all—but in heart !

Lie on my bosom, and lead me along
 Over lost scenes, by the magic of song !

What if I weep at the vision of years ?
 Sighs are not sorrows—and joy has her tears !
 Sad is my brow, as thy music is sad,
 But oh ! it is long since my heart was so glad !

All that is left me of life's promise is here,—
 Thou, my young idol, in sorrow more dear !
 But thy murmurs remind me of many away,
 And though I am glad, love ! I cannot be gay !—
 All have departed that offered like truth,
 Save thou—only thou—and the song of my youth !

There is much that is touching in this ; the poet asks for the song of early days ; he listens to its beautiful but now plaintive strain, the pleasures and joys of the past are recalled, his bright rainbow dreams and golden visions and unclouded hopes now breathe a sadness ; they have faded, save one, but she the sweetest and the dearest ; on his brow sits a pensive calmness, in her eye dwells a melancholy loveliness, her fair form reclines on his, thoughts and remembrances cross over the soul with dirge-like music.

The sunny anticipations of youth still play around our poet, but he is all alone. The gentle melodies of bee and bird, and the rich tints of the butterfly, and the exquisite charms of earth are disregarded ; they fascinate him not ; they but yield a deeper sense of loneliness.

I am all alone !—and the visions that play
 Round life's young days, have passed away ;
 And the songs are hushed that gladness sings,
 And the hopes that I cherished have made them wings ;
 And the light of my heart is dimmed and gone,
 As I sit in my sorrow—and all alone !

And the forms which I fondly loved are flown,
 And friends have departed—one by one ;
 And memory sits, whole lonely hours,
 And weaves her wreath of hope's faded flowers,
 And weeps o'er the chaplet, when no one is near
 To gaze on her grief, or to chide her tear !

And the hour of my childhood is distant far,
 And I walk in a land where strangers are ;
 And the looks that I meet, and the sounds that I hear,
 Are not light to my spirit, nor song to my ear ;
 And sunshine is round me—which I cannot see,
 And eyes which beam kindness—but not for me !

And the song goes round, and the glowing smile,
 But I am desolate all the while !
 And faces are bright and bosoms glad,
 And nothing, I think, but my heart is sad !
 And I seem like a blight in a region of bloom !
 While I dwell in my own little circle of gloom !

I wander about like a shadow of pain,
 With a worm in my breast, and a spell on my brain ;
 And I list, with a start, to the gushing of gladness,—
 Oh ! how it grates on a bosom all sadness !—
 So I turn from a world where I never was known,
 To sit in my sorrow—and all alone.

There are few who have not felt the loneliness so beautifully described in these verses : there are times when such sadness comes to all, but to the sensitive spirit most. How often do we wander in the gloom of our own hearts ! Around, and countenances may be lighted up with smiles, and the lips of beauty may warble the song of joy, and the eye of affection may beam with love, and the hand of generous daring may be ready to aid ; and yet we fancy that of all this exhaustless tenderness and care there is none for us.

Our poet betakes himself to the grave of his sister, and there meditates and weeps : he thinks of the past, and wishes that he was once more a child upon his mother's knee ; but he feels that such desires are futile ; he sighs to find them so. The moon, the clear silver moon, looks calmly down on the tomb, and on the solitary one : the stillness is in unison with his pensive thoughts ; the serene night is in accordance with his melancholy emotions ; he seems removed far off from the turmoil and anxiety of existence :—

The feeling is a nameless one
With which I sit upon thy stone,
And read the tale I dare not breathe,
Of blighted hope that sleeps beneath,
A simple tablet bears above
Brief record of a father's love,
And hints, in language yet more brief,
The story of a father's grief :—

Lost spirit!—thine was not a breast
To struggle vainly after rest !
Thou wert not made to bear the strife,
Nor labour through the storms of life ;
Thy heart was in too warm a mould
To mingle with the dull and cold,
And every thought that wronged thy truth
Fell like a blight upon thy youth !—
Thou shouldst have been, for thy distress,
Less pure—and oh, more passionless!
For sorrow's wasting mildew gave
Its tenant to my sister's grave !

But all thy griefs, my girl, are o'er !
Thy fair blue eyes shall weep no more !
'Tis sweet to know thy fragile form
Lies safe from every future storm !—
Oft, as I haunt the dreamy gloom

That gathers round thy peaceful tomb ;
I love to see the lightning stream
Along thy stone with fitful gleam ;
To fancy in each flash are given
Thy spirit's visitings from heaven ;—
And smile to hear the tempest rave
Above my sister's quiet grave !

The Farewell is no less sweet ; it is addressed by a female to her lover upon his going into the world. There is something peculiarly interesting on such an occasion : it may be that the two have grown up from childhood together, that they have reaped the same delights, tasted the same joys, witnessed the same scenes, borne the same sorrows, loved the same persons, attended the same school, sat on the same form, repeated the same tasks, conned the same page, regarded with affection the same flowers, looked on the same sunshine, rambled along the same meadows, strolled down the same wild lanes, gazed on the same stars, worshipped in the same old grey church ; and now, for the first time, they are to part, to break away from each other, to tear themselves from all that they love best on earth. Until now they knew not, thought not of separation ; that word, in its agony and bitterness, was sealed, and without meaning. But now the duties of life call, and they must learn that which they never learnt before :—

My early love, and must we part ?
Yes ! other wishes win thee now ;
New hopes are springing in thy heart,
New feelings brightening o'er thy brow !
And childhood's light and childhood's home
Are all forgot at glory's call,

Yet, cast one thought in years to come
On her who loved thee o'er them all.

When pleasure's bowl is filled for thee,
And thou hast raised the cup to sip,
I would not that one dream of me
Should chase the chalice from thy lip :
But should there mingle in the draught
One dream of days that long are o'er,
Then—only then—the pledge be quaff'd
To her who ne'er shall taste it more !

When love and friendship's holy joys
Within their magic circle bind thee,
And happy hearts and smiling eyes,
As all must wear who are around thee !
Remember that an eye as bright
Is dimmed—a heart as true is broken,
And turn thee from thy land of light,
To waste on these some little token.

But do not weep !—I could not bear
To stain thy cheek with sorrow's trace,
I would not draw one single tear
For worlds, down that beloved face.
As soon would I, if power were given,
Pluck out the bow from yonder sky,
And free the imprisoned floods of heaven,
As call one tear-drop to thine eye.

Yet oh, my love ! I know not why
It is a woman's thought !—but while
Thou offerest to my memory,
The tribute should not be—a smile !
For, though I would not see thee weep,
The heart, methinks, should not be gay,
That would the fast of feeling keep
For her who loves it, far away.

No ! give me but a single sigh,
Pure as we breathed in happier hours,
When very sighs were winged with joy,
Like gales that have swept over flowers ;

That uttering of a fond regret,
That strain my spirit long must pour :
A thousand dreams may wait us yet :
Our holiest and our first is o'er.

We feel the witching influence of the bard ; we own his sway : the shadows of evening fall around us ; the sun is setting in misty gloom ; the rain beats against our window ; the fire glimmers with its last red embers ; the twilight sinks into night ; the leaves are strewn upon the ground ; the trees are bare ; the winds sweep ever and anon through their leafless branches ; melancholy thoughts pass over the soul ; the past comes before us ; the loneliness of earth is clouded with dimness ; our mind dwells on the days long since flown ; we sink into pensive reveries ; our eye falls listlessly on the grate ; every sound is hushed save when the autumnal gale howls.

JAMES HURDIS.

PERHAPS there is no other country in which villages present so many charming and quiet beauties as England ; it is a land of pastoral hamlets, no less than of magnificent cities : their cottages, adorned with the clustering rose and honeysuckle, form, during the soft summer time, many a scene of picturesque sweetness ; the rainbow is not more beguiling to calm repose than these flower-en-shrouded homes.

But beautiful as our villages undoubtedly are, we think that they may be greatly improved by infusing a more refined taste among the people ; and we shall consider a few points conducive to this, ere we proceed to speak on that subject which has led to these remarks.

The most suitable person to carry village-improvement into effect is the pastor ; nor is this in the least derogatory to those higher and loftier objects to which his life is consecrated. It is true, indeed, that he is primarily placed over his flock for spiritual ends ; but is therefore the temporal and intellectual advancement to be forgotten or neglected ?

He will begin at home ; his own house will be a

pattern of neatness and beauty. The influence will be great; one little knows where to put limits to such a power: there are no dwellings which claim so much of our interest and love; they adorn the landscape; all the associations which hover around are pure and holy; the chapel-bell gives a strange, unutterable sweetness to an evening scene, and the loveliness of a secluded parsonage is not without its witchery.

The garden will also be continually looked after; it will be no unworthy occupation for the pastor to tend it with his own hands—it will teach him much: the earth, seed-time, and harvest are significant of revealed truth; it will give a freshness and a vigour to his frame, a healthy and cheerful tone to his mind. There is in the cultivation of a garden that wherein the taste for the beautiful may be displayed: flowers, and shrubs, and the blossoms of an orchard are everywhere a lovely sight; but lovelier nowhere than when connected with a parsonage: he will therefore avail himself of all these favourable feelings.

The church will claim a large share of his regard. How many have been left to decay by the negligence of their ministers!—and while he repairs and adorns the building, he will not forget its burial-ground. The church-yard is hallowed by the most solemn memories; it possesses a charm peculiarly its own; it will be his constant care; the slopes will be kept neatly cropped by a few sheep; their calm, quiet beauty, and the music of their tinkling bell, and their gentle looks, will throw a grace over

the spot ; other animals, on no account, should be turned in, they are repugnant to our sweetest associations ; a few yews and limes might be judiciously planted ; they harmonize with the holy enclosure ; flowers will enrich with their perfumes and enliven with their summer loveliness ; let these be reared, and open their blossoms to the luxuriant day, and shed their thousand scents on the balmy breeze.

Who does not love these quiet spots ? how sweet to wander among the tombs ; a pensive peace steals over the soul. The venerable church, the sheep, the trees, the flowers, the new-shorn grass, the gravel-walks, the memorials of the dead, and above a clear blue sky—oh, how exquisite is it there to muse on man's hopes and man's faith !—and the villagers may often repair hither, and seek to recall those they once loved, and the whole array of the past may unfold itself before them, and then may come the dying chamber and the dying bed, the last whisper of tenderness, the fading eye, the feebler grasp, the serene departure, the silence of the king of terrors, and all around will be in accordance with their feelings and desires, and there will be anticipations winging themselves to the region of the blessed and the region of the happy.

Now we cannot conceive a better employment than the beautifying such a place ; it is intimately connected with all that man holds dear, and it is interwoven with his highest aspirations after a purer and a better world.

There are one or two customs, however, of our

forefathers, which we should love to see revived : they may be simple, but this very simplicity is their charm ; they seem the breathing of a rural population, and the expression of a rustic people ; they seem heart-services, warm with the spirit's gratitude.

The decorating the graves with flowers, and the strewing of their fair blossoms in the path of the bride, we pass by, not because they are without grace, but because our limits will not allow us to add much more to this part of our paper ; but there is another, and we conceive a fairer custom; which, if carried out, might be useful in building up the soul in her intercourse with the Creator ; and that is, the offering of the hawthorn, the violet, and the daisy as the first fruits of the year. The rite is truly a hallowed one ; it is an act of acknowledgment—a token of our connexion with the Eternal ; it is the homage of a grateful bosom—the hymn of a thankful heart ; it speaks of the welcome and joy of a people—the goodness and care of a God ; and how lovely a temple thus decked with beauty, and thus perfumed with sweetness, and worshippers thus rendering their anthem for a Father's untiring love and a Father's unwearying blessing !—what a freshness would the sanctuary breathe !—what purity !—what peace !

The adorning our churches with evergreens at Christmas is too well conformed with, to need any comments here ; and surely these things are not too insignificant to be woven into the heaven-spun woof of our religion : they will tend to refine the

mind, they will soothe and soften the heart, and prepare it for the reception of those solemn truths which are symbolized by these customs ; and if the love of Jesus is known and felt, there will be a richer and deeper beauty in the flowers, the earth, and the sky.

The children of the villagers are under the immediate care of the pastor ; and we deem the custom of Legh Richmond, of taking them at times into the church-yard, and there giving scriptural instruction, as beautiful as it was soul-elevating. The place is well calculated to yield the finest impressions ; and how exquisite such a scene !—the shepherd of Christ, surrounded by his flock, and telling them of holiest things, is a lovely sight anywhere, but how much lovelier when amid the placid stillness of the past, and the scent of violets and roses, and the fretted heavens above ! The man of God, the little ones, the grassy graves, the light green turf, the sun-cinctured flowers, the dark yews, the soft balmy air, the cooling breeze, the old ivied church, combine to form a scene of tranquil sweetness which must steal and wind itself for ever around the heart.

And we believe that those hallowed and divine truths which throw their summer-radiance over our beautiful creation, and those thrilling associations, and calm memories, would glow with a more than ever brightening loveliness here, amid the stillness and the hush of nature ; and what illustrations in every bush, and tree, and cloud, and grave—in sunshine and in shade—in the deep quietude of

heaven's blue, and in the gentle breathing of its wind !

There is one other thing we would notice, and that is, the formation of a small library for each cottage ; some ten or a dozen volumes would do : such would, we believe, be far more beneficial than were the whole gathered into one large public mass ; this may do very well in towns and cities, but where there are few houses, it is better for each to have an allotted share, from some funds which might, without very great difficulty, be raised ;—a book is always read with a sweeter feeling of pleasure and profit when it is our own. Let the works be well chosen, and they would not fail, under God's blessing, of producing favourable results, and in spreading a more delightful loveliness over the fairest hamlet.

The love for the beautiful and true is of higher value than we imagine ; it is naught save the aspiration after man's purest image and the world's loveliest condition ; and it is the loss of this regard which renders humanity so low and earth-born ; and therefore any approach to this ever-blessed state, and any encouragement of this ever-divine principle, is the loftiest exercise of the soul and the sublimest play of the spirit.

James Hurdis, a name now nearly passed into oblivion, though deserving a much better fate, was the friend and admirer of Cowper. In his poems there is enough to be found, though ill-conceived and carelessly executed, to give him a place among these papers ; indeed, many of his lines we should

feel sorry to see blotted from the book of remembrance. He has none of the energy of the higher bard ; poetry stirred not his bosom with its irresistible power, as it stirred the breast of our own Milton ; his imagination revelled not in such imperial scenes—his heart glowed not with the eternal burning of inextinguishable thought : but the gentle breathing of the lyre was his ; he touched the chords of heavenly softness ; he was master of much delicious sweetness ; the mild sighing of the evening zephyr and the ripple of the brook he loved, rather than the bellowings of the midnight storm, or the surging of the ocean.

In his most popular production, the *Village Curate*, he has with much beauty described the life of a country clergyman ; and although it is wanting in the vigour and enthusiasm which constitute the great poet, still there is much to recommend it to our notice.

About his poetry there is more of beauty than grandeur ; more of gentle music than the glorious outbreak of song. His sketches are of green fields, and wild flowers, and April showers, and nuttings, and clear rills, and grassy dells, and soft, sweet twilights, and golden sunsets ; with the great, ponderous, gigantic eternity he has nothing to do. He is satisfied with the loveliness of this lower creation ; he enters not into that vast expanse of being which stretches everywhere around us ; he is not a “prophet poet,” but a “poetic artist ;” he is no seeker into the divine ; his attachment to nature is a friendship, not a passion ; its deep, magnificent

music he heard not ; he caught only the delicious melodies of woods, and streams, and birds ; we are pleased, but not spell-bound ; he would not have understood Schiller's expression—"Keep true to the dream of thy youth."

There is a degree of chaste beauty about this :—

In yonder mansion, reared by rustic hands,
And decked with no superfluous ornament,
Where use was all the architect proposed,
And all the master wished, which, scarce a mile
From village tumult, to the morning sun
Turns its warm aspect, yet with blossoms hung
Of cherry and of peach, lives happy still
The reverend Alcanor. On a hill,
Half-way between the summit and a brook
Which idly wanders at its foot, it stands,
And looks into a valley wood-besprent,
That winds along below. Beyond the brook,
Where the high coppice intercepts it not,
Or social elms, or with his ample waist
The venerable oak, up the steep side
Of yon aspiring hill full opposite,
Luxuriant pasture spreads before his eye
Eternal verdure ; save that here and there
A spot of deeper green shows where the swain
Expects a nobler harvest, or high poles
Mark the retreat of the scarce budded hop,
Hereafter to be eminently fair,
And hide the naked staff that trained him up
With golden flowers. On the hill-top behold
The village steeple, rising from the midst
Of many a rustic edifice ; 'tis all
The pastor's care.

Nature boasts not a sweeter scene than a quiet hamlet ; there is a calmness and a quietude about it which subdue the throbbing desires and the angry passions of the soul ; gaze on it at noon-day

—the sun is in the zenith ; the heavens are expansive as immensity ; a few light clouds float in the summer radiance ; every valley is lighted up ; the cottages, the parsonage, the church, the long plantation, the different clumps of trees, the silver waters, the mill, the boy fishing at the brook, the bridge, the dusty road winding up the hill, the silence—all influence the feelings ; a repose, soft and dream-like, overhangs the picture ; the birds have retired to the shade, the leaves stir not, the breeze has passed away ; there is a profound serenity.

Hurdis felt, with all the emotions of a poet, the tinklings of the beautiful village-bells ; and who can listen without thinking of the past ?—there comes the sunny hour of childhood ; we act again the scenes of life. Years roll on : we have entered the university ; we feel shackled by the appointed studies ; we long to breathe once more the free winds of heaven. . Perhaps we are engaged in the dark lecture-room, and the sun beams in at the ancient window ; it tells us of green grassy fields, and high hill-tops, and long shady woods, and straggling lanes, and mossy banks, and blossoming orchards, and bee-hives, and old ivied trees, and ancient halls, and tapering spires, and village-bells, and deep, deep tarns, and the blue-bell and the heather, and we long to behold them all again. Every spare moment is given to poetry and philosophy ; their music enchant the soul ; scenes of ideal loveliness paint themselves on the visual organs ; the heart burns with inextinguishable

thought. And—the silver bells have ceased, and we wake again to every-day life :—

Long let us stray,
 And ever, as we come to the shorn mead,
 And quit the garden with reluctance, then,
 When we behold the smiling valley spread
 In gay luxuriance far before us, sheep
 And oxen grazing, till the eye is stayed,
 The sinuous prospect turning from the view,
 And all above us, to the left and right,
 Enchanting woodland to the topmost hill :
 Then let the village-bells, as often wont,
 Come swelling on the breeze, and to the sun,
 Half-set, sing merrily their evening song.
 I ask not for the cause—it matters not ;
 It is enough for me to hear the sound
 Of the remote exhilarating peal,
 Now dying all away, now faintly heard,
 And now, with loud and musical relapse,
 Its mellow changes huddling on the ear.
 So have I stood at eve on Isis' banks,
 To hear the merry Christchurch bells rejoice ;
 So have I sat, too, in thy honoured shades,
 Distinguished Magdalen, on Cherwell's banks,
 To hear thy silver Wolsey tones so sweet.
 And so, too, have I paused, and held my oar,
 And suffered the slow stream to bear me home,
 While Wykeham's peal along the meadow ran.

The lines on May are worth preserving :—

How charming 'tis to see sweet May
 Laugh in the rear of winter, and put on
 Her gay apparel, to begin anew
 The wanton year. See where apace she comes,
 As fair, as young, as brisk, as when from heaven,
 Before the Founder of the world, she tripped
 To Paradise rejoicing : the high breeze
 Wafts to the sense a thousand odours : hark !
 The cheerful music which attends.

A charming description of May ! and how fresh and beautiful is this month ! It is arrayed with the delicious hawthorn, and all lovely flowers ; and enlivened with the music of a million happy creatures, who warble their notes in the sunshine. The smile of the King seems imaged in its cerulean sky, its green, transparent earth, and its running waters. Nature is adorned with pristine innocence. The heath, with its golden furze ; the hedges, with their white elders and wild honeysuckles ; the fields, with their cowslips and primroses ; the river banks, with their blue forget-me-nots ; the gardens, with their lilacs, laburnums, and acacias ; the orchards, with their apple and plum blossoms ; and the shrubberies, with their myrtles, laurels, and lignums, beam with beauty. There is a revelry of earth and sky.

How nearly allied is May with all that we experienced in youth ! How thrilling were those moments when the heart first awoke to the glories of creation ! the earth seemed some divine abode, some spirit-dwelling realm. We thought not of sorrow ; love alone reigned ; it threw over all things an infinite meaning, an everlasting expression ; the very air teemed with richest odours. The world, with its thousand happy homes, broke in upon the soul as a dream ; and as May came and went, a heaven of felicity pervaded all the soul.

But, as summer wore on, our emotions became more spiritual ; and the paintings of the fancy bore a deeper colouring. How sweet, on a quiet even-tide, to saunter along the walks of an old garden :—

In such a silent, cool, and wholesome hour,
The Author of the world from heaven came
To walk in Paradise, well pleased to mark
The harmless deeds of new-created man.
And sure, the silent, cool, and wholesome hour
May still delight him, our atonement made.
Who knows, but as we walk, he walks unseen,
And sees and well approves the cheerful task
The fair one loves. He breathes upon the pink,
And gives it odour; touches the sweet rose,
And makes it glow; beckons the evening dew,
And sheds it on the lupin and the pea:
Then smiles on her, and beautifies her cheek
With gay good humour, happiness, and health.
So all are passing sweet, and the young Eve
Feels all her pains rewarded, all her joys
Perfect and unimpaired.

Hurdis has one fine passage on the storm; its last few lines are exceedingly pleasing. The allusion to the family meeting in the morning after the midnight tempest, and their telling how fiercely flashed the lightnings, and how loudly the thunders rolled, and how furiously the winds blew, and how the driving rain dashed against the window panes, is beyond expression beautiful.

Let me sit to see the lowering storm
Collect its dusky horrors, and advance
To bellow sternly in the ear of night;
To see the Almighty Electrician come,
Making the clouds his chariot. Who can stand
When he appears? The conscious creature flies,
And skulks away, afraid to see his God
Charge and re-charge his dreadful battery.
For who so pure his lightning might not blast,
And be the messenger of justice? Who
Can stand exposed, and to his Judge exclaim,
“ My heart is cleansed, turn thy storm away?”

Fear not, ye fair, who with the naughty world
Have seldom mingled. Mark the rolling storm,
And let me hear you tell, when morning comes,
With what tremendous howl the furious blast
Blew the large shower in heavy cataract
Against your window ; how the keen, the quick,
And vivid lightning quivered on your bed,
And how the deep artillery of heaven
Broke loose, and shook your coward habitation.

The drying up of the storm is vividly depicted in the following lines ; the scene is rendered almost visible ; we see the clear blue sky, the sunny radiance, the rain-drops hanging on the branches, the leaves shaken by the fresh breeze ; we almost feel the purer existence :—

At length the storm abates ; the furious wind
No longer howls ; the lightning faintly gleams,
And the retiring thunder scarce is heard ;
The shower ceases, and the golden sun
Bursts from the cloud, and hangs the wood with pearls,
Fast falling to the ground ; on the dark cloud
His watery ray impressed, in brilliant hues
Paints the gay rainbow—all is calm and clear ;
The blackbird sings.

In 1792, our poet lost his favourite sister Catherine ; he felt that his family circle was broken into, and robbed of its sweetest member. This preyed deeply on his sensitive and affectionate heart ; he felt the trial keenly. “She was a gem,” so he writes to Cowper, “which had hung around my neck all the days of my life, and never lost its lustre.” This dear and much-loved girl is the Margaret and Isabel of his poetry. How forcible and eloquent does his grief burst forth ; but it soon

breathes a sweeter and calmer note ; he becomes more resigned ; his lips speak a holier language ; his sorrow is serene and gentle ; no throbbing outbreak now ; all quiet and all still :—

Yes, I was happier once, and fondly sung
Of comforts not dissembled of my cot,
And sweet amusements which attract no more.
Methought my song should ever be content,
Placed by my God where I was richly blessed,
In such a nook of life, that I nor wished
Nor fancied aught could have pleased me more.
So sings the summer linnet on the bough ;
And, pleased with the warm sun-beam, half asleep,
The feeble sonnet of supine content
To his Creator warbles ; warbles sweet,
And not condemned, till some unfeeling boy
His piece unheeded levels, and with shower
Of leaden mischief his ill uttered song
Suddenly closes ; pines the songster then,
Wounded and scared, flutters from bough to bough,
Complains and dies, or lingers life away
In silent anguish, and is heard no more.

My God, have I arraigned thee ? Let thy bow
Ten thousand arrows in this bosom fix,
Yet will I own thee just ; take all away,
Leave me no friend, but let me weep alone
At mute affliction's solitary board :
Summon Cecilia to an early grave,
And let her tribe of cheerful graces fade,
Fast as the flower she gathers ; let the worm
Prey on the roses of Eliza's cheek,
Yet will I bless thee ; for to this harsh world
I came a beggar, but sufficient bread
Have never needed ; thy indulgent hand
Fed and sustained me, and sustains me still ;
Nor feel I hardship which thy partial rod
To me alone dispenses ; bitter loss,
Sorrow and misery, o'erflow the cup
Of many a soul more innocent than mine.

Thou bounteous Author of all human bliss,
Give me whatever lot thy wisdom deems
Meet and convenient—pleasure, if thou wilt—
If not, then pain—and be it sharp as this—
My heart, though wounded, shall adore thee still.

From these specimens, and others which might easily be adduced, we think with Southey, that Hurdis ought to have a place in every collection of the British Poets. If his talents were not brilliant, they were far superior to many whose names are still mentioned with honour. But with this world he himself has done; his spirit has entered that vast and gigantic fabric, "not made with hands," where a thousand lyres breathe out their harmonies to the Invisible.

EDWARD IRVING.

To the memory of the great and holy Edward Irving, we inscribe the contents of this paper. It is a token of our lasting regard and admiration. He was the first man whom we learned to love. The story of his life affected us more strangely than the history of a Dante or a Luther : his was a marvellous tale. Hallowing are the feelings with which we gaze on the portrait of this magnificent man !—there it is, with his broad, expansive forehead, his dark, black curls, his wild, frenzied eye, his mild lips, his whole expression of a majestic and gigantic mind. We could look thereon for hours ; it breathes so much splendour of intellect, and yet such deep and sincere holiness.

No man ever possessed greater intellectual power with a larger share of true piety ; he was a prince in mind and in heart—in thought and in feelings. Aye, he is a prince now among the thrones, dominions, and powers of the blessed world ! His very look struck one as something above the common race ; he was an immortal among mortals ; he felt himself as the ambassador of the Holiest ; he understood thoroughly the majesty of the ministerial character, and to this high but just regard may be

traced many of his misfortunes. He knew that it stood alone and unapproachable ; before it, kings and nobles were as beggars ; it stripped society of its gilded follies, and laid bare the emptiness of its vanities ; it had the eye of the Eternal ; it looked on man as he is, and not as he is not ; it had its station between heaven and earth ; it was endowed with privileges greater than those of angels ; it was God incarnate—God himself standing up and offering mercy and redemption to a fallen and a lost people ; its every note was authoritative—its every intonation godlike ; the splendours and the terrors of the Divinity alike upheld it ; upon all its parts shone the full, unclouded glory of the Highest ; to man it was not responsible—to none was it amenable but Jehovah ; He was vouch'd to support and bless it to the end of time. Such was Irving's opinion of the legate's office ; and it was not too lofty.

Our author was essentially a poet—a great poet : the energy and beauty of everlasting truths glow throughout all his writings. We acknowledge that he is not always sustained, that he is oftentimes weak, insipid, and even absurd ; there are, doubtless, many inferior passages ; his soul, at seasons, was divested of its majesty and its grandeur ; but is not this common to all genius ?—is Massillon always eloquent ?—is Fenelon ever winning and subduing ?—is there no weakness in Bossuet's thundering denunciations, no stooping in his eagle flight ?—is Robert Hall without one harsh note throwing some discord into his exquisite paragraphs ?—is Chalmers

faultless? The magnificent outpourings, the gorgeous outbreaks, and the sublime outbursts of the intellect and heart will not be perfect until we reach the invisible world; there these splendid gifts will be fully developed, and the rapt multitude will speak their applause in the deep-hushed silence. On earth, the purest oratory must necessarily be dim—the loftiest hymn feeble; but when Irving was himself, who so vast in his creations as he? There is an imperishableness about his every word; they breathe the richest intonations of the highest poetry—they are the swellings of the Divine mind—they cannot pass away and be forgotten—they are the thoughts of a mighty one—they light up our existence with radiance—they dignify our manhood—they sparkle with a celestial lustre—they burn with an inextinguishable brilliancy; it is the soft sighing of the falling zephyr, and the crash of ten thousand thunders.

In his boyhood, Irving evinced little or no taste for learning—he cared not for books; climbing the mountain-height, and wandering down wild, narrow glens, and looking into the dark tarns, formed his favourite amusement and instruction. He loved to breathe the free air of liberty; creation taught him eloquence and beauty; the hymn of Nature was whispered in every breeze, and sung in every wild sweep of the tempest: he was aroused—he was stirred; he felt the mighty impulse; he yielded to the powerful influence. From that moment he aspired to be above his fellows; he knew that his proper sphere was to rule; henceforth he gave the

energy of his herculean intellect to the study of man ; he called around him the immortals, and held long and deep communion ; his aspirations pointed onwards to the church ; therein he found a resting-place for his spirit : the realities of the unseen world, the sublimity of the redemption, the mild meekness of the Saviour, the fatherly tenderness of God, the pure inspiration and teachings of the Comforter, the first breathing of repentance, the return of the wanderer to the fold, the gratulation of angels, were subjects that absorbed his soul ; and he loved : then came a softened radiance, a mellowed lustre, over his majestic courage and tremendous conceptions.

Years rolled away, and Irving was in the zenith of a London popularity ; and he had married his first and only love. Princes and nobles crowded to hear his thrilling eloquence : then came the full display of his fearlessness of man ; for sin and iniquity he reproved him ; he shrank not from his duty as the commissioned legate of Heaven ; rank, to him, was a vain bauble ; it presented no safeguard against his denunciation of wickedness ; in the presence of the Eternal he knew of no distinctions—all the different grades of society were levelled there—crowns and coronets were thrown aside ; his spirit scorned to flatter—the beggar and the peer alike trembled before his faithfulness ; he felt the majesty and dignity of his sacred office ; pride and vanity were banished, and the glory of his Maker alone filled his heart—its every pulsation beat to his praise.

Gilfillan, speaking of his pulpit ministrations, says—"His manner also contributed to the charm ; his aspect, wild, yet grave as of one labouring with some mighty burden ; his voice, deep, clear, and with crashes of power alternating with cadences of softest melody ; his action, now graceful as the wave of the rose-bush in the breeze, and now fierce and urgent as the midnight motion of the oak in the hurricane ; the countenance, kindling, dilating, contracting, brightening, or blackening with the theme—now attractive in its fine symmetrical repose, and now terrible to look at, in its strong lines, and glaring excitement, and an air of earnestness and enthusiasm which ever prevented the impression that it was a mere display ; all this formed an unparalleled combination of the elements of Christian oratory."

But to this master-eloquence Irving added deep and fervent piety ; whatever may have been his errors, they were errors of the intellect, and not of the heart ; his whole being was devoted to the service of Jehovah ; his entire existence was wrapt up in the Holiest ; his religion was soul-influencing, spirit-exalting—withal, it gave him meekness, gentleness, and long-suffering ; his conduct was as pure as his intellectual stature was gigantic ; his moral nature was as conspicuous as his endowments were brilliant ; in all things he sought the guidance and the smile of the Everlasting ; he was a man of unceasing prayer. "Some few of his contemporaries might equal him in preaching, but none approached to the very hem of his garment

while wrapt up into the heaven of devotion ; it struck you as the prayer of a great being conversing with God ; your thoughts were transported to Sinai, and you heard Moses speaking with the Majesty on high, under the canopy of darkness, amid the quaking of the solid mountain, and the glimmerings of celestial fire ; or you thought of Elijah praying in the cave in the intervals of the earthquake ; and the fire and the still small voice ; the solemnity of the tones convinced you that he was conscious of an unearthly presence, and speaking to it, not to you ; the diction and imagery showed that his faculties were wrought up to their highest pitch, and tasked to their noblest endeavour in that celestial colloquy sublime ; and yet the elaborate intricacy and swelling pomp of his preaching were exchanged for deep simplicity ; a profusion of scripture was used ; and never did inspired language become lips more than those of Irving : his public prayers told to those who could interpret their language of many a secret conference with heaven ; they pointed to wrestlings all unseen, and groanings all unheard ; they drew aside, involuntarily, the veil of his secret retirements, and let a light into the sanctuary of the closet itself. Prayers more elegant, and beautiful, and melting, have often been heard ; prayers more urgent in their fervid importunity have been uttered once and again—such as those which were sometimes heard with deep awe to proceed from the chamber where the perturbed spirit of Hall was conversing aloud with its Maker, till the dawning of the day,—

but prayers more majestic, and organ-like, and Miltonic, never."

But to his oratory : how full of sublime poetry is this on the Day of Judgment :—

But come at length it will, when Revenge shall array herself to go forth, and Anguish shall attend her, and from the wheels of their chariot, Ruin and Dismay shall shoot far and wide among the enemies of the king, whose desolation shall not tarry, and whose destruction, as the wing of the whirlwind, shall be swift ; hopeless as the conclusion of eternity, and the reversion of doom. Then around the fiery concave of the wasteful pit the clang of grief shall ring, and the flinty heart which repelled tender mercy shall strike its fangs into its proper bosom ; and the soft and gentle spirit which dissolved in voluptuous pleasures shall dissolve in weeping sorrows and outbursting lamentations ; and the gay glory of time shall depart ; and sportful liberty shall be bound for ever in the chain of obdurate necessity. The green earth, with all her blooming beauty and bowers of peace, shall depart ; the morning and evening salutations of kinsmen shall depart ; and the ever-welcome voice of friendship, and the tender whisperings of full-hearted affection, shall depart for the sad discord of weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth ; and the tender names of children, father, and mother, and wife, and husband, with the communion of domestic love and mutual affection ; and the inward touches of natural instinct, which family compact, when uninvaded by discord, wraps the live-long day into one swell of tender emotion, making earth's lowly scenes worthy of heaven itself—all, all shall pass away ; and instead, shall come the level lake that burneth, and the solitary dungeon, and the desolate bosom, and the throes and tossings of horror and hopelessness, and the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched.

Many have written on this subject, but none more powerfully than our author. It is big with coming wrath and woe ; and the allusion to all the tender sympathies of life renders the picture of despair more tremendous in its outlines. The oft-

repeated fact is clothed with new force and sublimity ; it is as original as it is striking ; it is invested with a darker hue, and coloured with a blacker shade, than heretofore ; it sweeps on, misery after misery, until it reaches the consummation of never-ending agony.

With what beauty of thought, and chasteness of expression, has our poet depicted the death-bed of the good man :—

The man of God looks to the end of the race he has been patiently running, and beholds the goal at hand ; he looks upon the recompence of reward which is awaiting him, the prize of his high calling in Christ Jesus. The last enemy that he hath to overcome is Death ; the king of terrors is to be met face to face. He cannot avoid the combat, if he would, and he would not, if he could. How often in the travail of his soul hath he exclaimed : “Woe is me that I am constrained to dwell in Meshech, and to have my habitation amongst the tents of Kedar ! O that I had the wings of a dove, for then would I flee away, and be at rest !” How often hath he not said : “In thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore. As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness. When I awake, I shall be satisfied with thy likeness.” And now that his conflicts are about to cease for ever, and his sorrows have an end, he lifteth up his head, because the day of his redemption draweth nigh. In vision, his spirit already winged to take its everlasting flight, discerneth the throne of God encircled by a ten thousand times ten thousand sons of light ; in vision he mingles with the glorious throng ; he tunes his harp to the heavenly theme, and sings the song of Moses and the Lamb. Sprinkled with the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel, he ascends in spirit to the Mount Zion, the city of the living God, making one with the innumerable company of angels and general assembly and church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven. Ah ! how does it grieve his soul to wake once again out of the trance of bliss, to open his eyes once again upon the cold, dull, blank realities of life.

The syren world hath no longer any charms for him. He hath proved the falseness of her beauty ; he hath seen the glory that excelleth, and hath no eye to look upon fictitious brightness. He hath seen the King in his beauty, and the land that is afar off : how shall he endure to soil his feet again with the base mould of the degenerate earth, to breathe any longer the polluted atmosphere of a world poisoned with sin, and full of the voices of sorrow ! In this tabernacle he groans, being burdened. And when the grisly king shakes against him his terrible dart, he openeth his bosom to receive the stroke of grace, saying the while : “ O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ? ” and, looking up to heaven, he takes his departure, saying : “ Into thy hand I command my spirit ; for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth ! ”

The gentle putting off of mortality is exquisitely described in this passage : it is a sweet hymn to the power of death ; it breathes the soft, soul-like melody of Bryant. We become in love with the mighty giant ; he is divested of his terrors. It is a yielding up of our corruptible, decayed, diseased existence : it is the putting on of our immortal, everlasting being ; it is casting away the dross ; the receiving the pure, the fine gold.

In the same exquisite and simple strain is the following successful description :—

You have felt, or you have seen, the rapt enjoyment of an aged sire, making a round of his children in their several homes, beholding them blooming and rejoicing in the favour of the Lord, with their little ones encircling them like the shoots of the tender vine. No discords to heal, no sorrows to assuage, no misfortunes to lament in all that have sprung from his loins. What an emotion of paternal glory and pious thankfulness fills his breast ! —he looks round upon the numerous and happy flock, bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, and the tear silently fills his eye, which he lifts to heaven, the seat of God, with a look that would say, Thou hast dealt bountifully with thy servant ; now let him depart in peace. One such sight

makes a parent forget the care and labour of a long life ; one such emotion puts to flight all the fears and forebodings of a parent's heart ; his soul is satisfied, the measure of his joy is full.

This beautiful picture is enough to make one forget the turmoil of life, and to throw around the soul one glow of holy happiness. It is sketched and coloured with the true spirit of the poet. We joy to know and feel that there is such inexpressible blessedness in the cup of existence, such unutterable peace even in our lost and fallen condition. It is not all sorrow, it is not all grief ; we have days and hours of sunshine. The affections of life yield us immeasurable felicity, and the more they are cherished and honoured, so much the greater will be their hallowed and soul-exalting power. The finer feelings of our nature play ever a melody to the mercy of the Eternal.

How sweet is the following argumentation in support of the Spirit's operations ; it is literally imbued with all the deliciousness of poetry :—

If, then, the truth of God's presence and presidency in our wordly affairs finds for itself universal belief among Christians, though resting on revelation alone, and having no foundation either in sight or perception, upon what plea will they reject the doctrine of the Spirit's presence and presidency in the great world of grace, if it be found revealed with the same distinctness ? There ought, therefore, to be no preliminary objection taken to it upon the grounds of its not being perceptible, but the Scriptures should be searched whether it be so or not. Rather, upon the other hand, because it is not perceptible, we should entertain it as more akin to the other operations of the invisible God ; for, exalting your thoughts a little, conceive the ways of God ; look abroad over the world, and what do you behold ? Noiseless nature putting forth her buds, and

drinking the milk of her existence from the distant sun. Where is God? He is not seen, he is not heard. Where is the sound of his footsteps?—where the rushing of his chariot-wheels?—where is his storehouse for this inhabited earth?—where are the germs of future plants, the juices of future fruits?—and where is the hand dividing its portion to every living thing, and filling their hearts with life and joy?—Lift your thoughts a little higher, behold the sun,—doth he, when preparing to run his race, shake himself like a strong man after sleep, and make a rustling noise, and lift up his voice to God for a renewal of his exhausted strength? Doth the pale-faced and modest moon, which cometh forth in the season of the night, make music in the still silence to her Maker's praise? Do the stars in their several spheres tell to mortal sense the wondrous stories of their births? Again, turn your thoughts inward upon yourselves, and say if your manly strength did grow out of infant helplessness, with busy preparations and noisy workmanship, as the chiselled form of man growtheth out of the quarried stone? In the still evening, when you lay you down wearied and worn out, doth your strength return during the watches of the sleepy and unconscious night by noise and trouble, as a worn-out machine is refitted by the cunning workman? Tell me how intelligence grows upon the unconscious babe: where are the avenues of knowledge, and by what method does it fix itself?

Faithful, we have said, and fearless were Irving's pulpit ministrations; take this as a specimen:—

If you get not the soul's attachments to the world loosened before death, there will ensue such a rending and agony upon your departure, as no loss of country, of wife, or children can be compared with; and if you take not a cool forethought of the future, nor prepare to meet it, there will come such a brood of fears, such a wreck of hopes, as no improvident spendthrift ever encountered. Oh, if the loss of fortune can so agitate the soul, and the loss of fame, the loss of a child, a wife, or a friend—if any one of these things can make the world seem desolate, what conceivable agony, when all fortune, family, friends, and fame shall have left you, to dwell alone in a waste, empty, yawning void of grief and disappointment!

Ye sons of men, if these things are even so, and ye tread every moment upon the brink of time, and live upon the eve of judgment, what avails your many cares and your unresting occupations? Will your snug dwellings, your gay clothing, and your downy beds give freshness to the stiffened joints, or remove the disease which hath got a lodgment in your marrow and in your bones? Will your full table and cool wines give edge to a jaded appetite, or remove the rancour of a rotted tooth, or supply the vigour of a worn down frame? Will a crowded board, and the full flow of jovial mirth, and beauty's wreathed smile and beauty's dulcet voice, charm back to a crazy dwelling the ardours and graces of youth? Will yellow gold bribe the tongue of memory and wipe away from the tablets of the mind the remembrance of former doings? Will worldly goods reach upwards to heaven, and bribe the pen of the recording angel, that he should cancel from God's books all vestige of our crimes? or bribe Providence, that no cold blast should come sweeping over our garden and lay it desolate? or abrogate that eternal law by which sin and sorrow, righteousness and peace are bound together? Will they lift up their voice and say, wickedness shall no more beget woe, nor vice engender pain, nor indulgence end in weariness, nor the brood of sin fatten upon the bowels of human happiness, and leave, wherever their snakish teeth do touch, the venom and sting of remorse? And when that last most awful hour shall come, when we stand upon the brink of two worlds, and feel the earth sliding from beneath our feet, and nothing to hold on by, that we should not fall into the unfathomed abyss; and when a film shall come over our eyes, shutting out from the soul for ever, friends, and favourites, and visible things—what are we, what have we, if we have not a treasure in heaven, and an establishment there? And when the deliquium of death is passed, and we find ourselves in the other world under the eye of Him that is holy and pure, where shall we hide ourselves, if we have no protection and righteousness of Christ?

It is sure as death and destiny, that if you awake not from this infatuation of custom and pleasure at the calls of God your Saviour, the habitations of dismal cruelty, endless days and nights of sorrow, shall be your doom. Could I lift the curtain which shrouds eternity from the eye of time, and disclose the

lazar-house of eternal death, what sleeper of you would not start at the chaos of commingled grief? Dives, surrounded with his eastern pomp and luxury, little dreamt that he was to awaken in torment, and crave a drop of water to cool his tongue. What business has any forgetter of God with any better fare? There is no purgatory to purge away the spiritual dross your spirits are encrusted with, and make you clean for heaven. It is not true, that after a season of endurance, the prince of the bottomless pit will hand you at length into heaven. Without holiness no man can see God: without Christ, no man can attain to holiness. Yet, conscious that you are unholy—deriving no mediation from Christ—deceiving yourselves with no respite nor alleviation of punishment—here you are, listless, lethargic, and immovable.

Men and brethren! is this always to continue, or is it to have an end? If you are resolved to brave it out, then make ready for a proof to make nature shudder and quake to her inmost recesses. Can ye stand and brave Omnipotence to do his utmost? In this world, where power is muffled with mercy, there are a thousand inflictions which ye could not brave. Could ye stand all that was laid upon patient Job?—possessions, sons, daughters, health reaved away; then hope benighted, and the light of heaven removed, and fellowship of friends, and almighty displays of power and wrath? The hardy band of Roman soldiers—and who so stout-hearted as Romans!—swooned every man of them at the sight of one of God's visions. What could ye, were God's judgment-seat displayed, his justice no longer restrained, and his retribution no longer delayed; every fleet minister of execution ready harnessed at his post, and hell opening wide its mouth, insatiable as the grave, and grimmer than the visage of death. Arraigned, self-condemned, singled out of every crime, solitary, unbefriended, one among thousands; life's pleasures at an end, the world's vision faded, God's anger revealed, sentence passed, judgment proceeding, and the pit opening its mouth on you as the earth on Korah's company, to receive you quick. Can you stand this?—can you think to brave it? Then, verily, ye are mad, or callous as the nether millstone.

Do you disbelieve it then?—do you think God will not be so bad as his word? When did he fail? Did he fail at Eden,

when the world fell? Did he fail at the deluge, when the world was cleansed of all animation, save a handful? Did he fail upon the cities of the plain, though remonstrated with by his friend, the father of the faithful? Failed he in the ten plagues of Egypt, or against the seven nations of Canaan; or, when he armed against his proper people, did ever his threatened judgments fail? Did he draw off when his own Son was suffering, and remove the cup from his innocent lips? And think ye he will fail, brethren, of that future destiny from which to retrieve us, he hath undertaken all his wondrous works unto the children of men? Why, if it were but an idle threat, would he not have spared his only-begotten Son, and not delivered him up to death? That sacred blood, as it is the security of heaven to those who trust in it, is the very seal of hell to those who despise it.

Disbelieve, you cannot—brave it out, you dare not: then must you hope, at some more convenient season, to reform. So hoped the five virgins, who slumbered and slept without oil in their lamps; and you know how they fared. Neither have you forgotten how the merchant, and the farmer, and the sons of pleasure, who refused the invitation to the marriage-feast of the king's son, were consumed with fire from heaven. What is your life, that you should trust in it?—is it not even a vapour that speedily passeth away? What security have you that Heaven will warn you beforehand, or that Heaven will help you to repentance whenever you please? Will the resolution of your mind gather strength as your other faculties of body and mind decay?—will sin grow weaker by being awhile longer indulged in?—or God grow more friendly by being awhile longer spurned?—or the gospel more persuasive by being awhile longer set at nought? I rede you, beware of the thief of time, Procrastination! This day is as convenient as to-morrow; this day is yours, to-morrow is not; this day is a day of mercy, to-morrow may be a day of doom.

We must remember that this was addressed to the numberless magnates who crowded to hear him. Their rank, their wealth, their beauty, their splendour, were of no avail, when the plague-spot of sin was on them. He pleaded with them as with low-

born, unlettered men ; he reasoned with them as with poverty-stricken, ignorant mortals : he denounced their iniquities, their vanities, their fashionalities, with boldness and courage ; he was a Nathan among the aristocracy ; he forced home the truth ; he pierced through heaped honours and accumulated distinctions to the soul ; he exclaimed, in the burning utterances of his sacred oratory, “Thou art the man !” He was “one who ‘strove,’ says Carlyle, ‘to be a Christian priest in an age most alien to the character’—one who reminded the subtle Coleridge of Luther and Paul—one who stormed on the solitary whirlwind of his eloquence into the very heart of London popularity, and hovered there, unequalled and unapproached, till his own wild breath turned the current—one whose errors were all of the blood, and none of the spirit—the herculean, misguided, but magnificent man—Edward Irving.”

JOHN KEATS.

LATMIAN air, sweet-scented, breathed around us, and the sky was blue with beauty. The forest spreading there did sun itself in the morning light. Within its cool retreat was an open space, and “full in the middle of this pleasantness there stood a marble altar.” The silver daisy sprinkled the emerald lawn. The clouds were bright in the eastern heaven. “A melancholy spirit well might win oblivion, and melt out his essence fine into the winds,” in the freshness of that early dawn. “Rain-scented eglantine gave temperate sweets to that well-wooing sun.”

The morn broke into beauty : children gathered round the altar in joyous merriment, “wishing to espy some folk of holiday.” They wait not long ; music “filled out its voice and died away again.” “The light-hung leaves” trembled “through copse-clad vallies” with the faint melody. And there was heard “the surgy murmurs of the lonely sea.”

“Leading the way, young damsels danced along,” “each having a white wicker, over-brimmed with April’s tender younglings;” then followed shepherds and a “venerable priest begirt with ministering looks,” and afterwards “came another crowd

of shepherds." Then was heard the rolling of "a fair wrought-car :" —

Who stood therein did seem of great renown
 Among the throng. His youth was fully blown,
 Showing like Ganymede to manhood grown :
 And for those simple times, his garments were
 A chieftain king's: beneath his breast, half-bare,
 Was hung a silver bugle, and between
 His nervy knees there lay a boar-spear keen.
 A smile was on his countenance ; he seemed
 To common lookers-on, like one who dreamed
 Of idleness in groves Elysian :
 But there were some who feelingly could scan
 A lurking trouble in his nether lip,
 And see that oftentimes the reins would slip
 Through his forgotten hands : then would they sigh,
 And think of yellow leaves, of owlets' cry,
 Of logs piled solemnly.—Ah, well-a-day,
 Why should our young Endymion pine away !

" Soon the assembly, in a circle ranged, stood silent round the shrine," and there were mystic doings. " Each cheek of virgin-bloom paled gently for slight fear." Endymion too, " among his brothers of the mountain chase," stood silent. Then spoke the priest of vows to Pan, and of the beautiful Latmos, " where sweet air stirs blue hare-bells lightly ;" and then the incense-rose, mixed with wine and flowers, up to heaven, followed by the shepherd-hymn.

The worshippers were joyous ; but Endymion looked " wan and pale." His sister led him to her shady bower ; her " eloquence did breathe away the curse ;" all so quiet there,

That a whispering blade
 Of grass, a wailful gnat, a bee bustling

Down in the blue-bells, or a wren light rustling
Among sere leaves and twigs, might all be heard.

Then after sleep, Endymion woke, and told his
sister all his melancholy care :—

Methought I lay
Watching the zenith, where the milky way
Among the stars in virgin splendour pours ;
And travelling my eye, until the doors
Of heaven appeared to open for my flight,
I became loth and fearful to alight
From such high soaring by a downward glance : :
So kept me steadfast in that airy trance,
Spreading imaginary pinions wide.
When, presently, the stars began to glide,
And faint away before my eager view.
At which I sighed that I could not pursue,
And dropped my vision to the horizon's verge ;
And lo ! from opening clouds, I saw emerge
The loveliest moon that ever silvered o'er
A shell for Neptune's goblet ; she did soar
So passionately bright, my dazzled soul
Commingling with her argent spheres did roll
Through clear and cloudy, even when she went
At last into a dark and vapoury tent—
Whereat, methought, the lidless-eye train
Of planets all were in the blue again.
To commune with those orbs, once more I raised
My sight right upward : but it was quite dazed
By a bright something, sailing down apace,
Making me quickly veil my eyes and face :
Again I looked, and, O ye deities,
Who from Olympus watch our destinies !
Whence that completed form of all completeness ?
Whence came that high perfection of all sweetness ?
Speak, stubborn earth, and tell me where, O where,
Hast thou a symbol of her golden hair ?
Not oat-sheaves drooping in the western sun,
Not—thy soft hand, fair sister ! let me shun
Such follying before thee—yet she had

Indeed locks bright enough to make me mad ;
And they were simply gordianed up and braided,
Leaving, in naked comeliness, unshaded,
Her pearl round ears, white neck, and orb'd brow ;
The which were blended in, I know not how,
With such a paradise of lips and eyes,
Blush tinted cheeks, half smiles, and faintest sighs,
That, when I think thereon, my spirit clings
And plays about its fancy, till the stings
Of human neighbourhood envenom all.

She wooed him to a spot all "soft with flowers," and "there were store of newest joys upon that alp." Then again came sleep with "its drowsy numbness," and he afterwards awoke to dismal loneliness. His sister, fair Peona, gave soothing comfort and so he breathed once more, some other "meeting blessed." By this the sun was setting, and the heavens were crimsoned westward.

Endymion wandered still amid the "woods of mossed oak," and through an opening passed onwards, when a voice bade him descend "into the sparry hollows of the world." Down, down he went; down, down, still down. But anon "he came upon a chamber, myrtle-walled, full of light, incense, tender minstrelsy," and there was "manna, picked from Syrian trees in starlight, by the three Hesperides," and "wine alive with sparkles." "Then there was a hum of sudden voices, echoing" to the sleeping Adonis :—"Clear summer had forth walked into the clover-sward;" she has sung "full soothingly to every nested finch." Here Endymion beheld the meeting of "Amphitrite, queen of pearls," with her new-born love: she smiles and bids him hope.

Then came he to “a jasmine bower, all bestrewed with golden moss.” “The little flowers felt his pleasant sighs and stirred them faintly.” Then came sad Melancholy, and he was lonely as a bird robbed of his chirping mate. And he did dream of her, his own loved-one, and wondered where might be her silver dwelling-place, upon what skies she gazed. Then he welcomed sleep to banish sorrow; and threw himself on “the smoothest mossy bed and deepest” he could find. “The known unknown” was there; “long time ere soft caressing sobs began to mellow into words;” and there “were entranced vows and tears.”

Morning rose and dawned; and he was all alone. Other loves he heard; the loves of Arethusa and her Alphæus. “He turned—there was a whelming sound—he stept, there was a cooler light;” and so onwards pressed he till “he saw the giant sea above his head.” Here he met with an aged man who welcomed him with joy. In one destiny were both entwined. He narrated his tale of love and woe. “Twin brothers” they in all-powerful fate. “Sweet-music breathed her soul away, and sighed a lullaby to silence.” The youth dared to achieve, and so Olympus smiled. “A soft blending of dulcet instruments came charmingly; and then a hymn;” this worship to the Ocean-god.

Then all the glory passed, and “a placid lake came quiet to his eyes;” “ lulled with its simple song his fluttering breast,” felt once more happy. He “was offering up a hecatomb of vows,” when the melancholy words of sorrowing maiden reached

him. “There’s not a breath will mingle kindly with the meadow air, till it has parted round, and stole a share of passion from the heart.” Endymion’s mind was racked to madness; and he forgot his own celestial being, moved by the plaintive song of this lone creature. He “could not speak;” but “gazed and listened to the wind that now did stir about the crised oaks full drearily, yet with as sweet a softness as might be remembered from its velvet summer song.” Her liquid tones bewildered. “Woe, woe, woe to that Endymion! where is he?—even these words went echoing dismally through the wide forest;” then came “two steeds jet-black” from the green-clad earth, “the youth of Caria placed the lovely dame on one,” and on the other himself did mount. Slowly they sailed amid the air, and Endymion dreamed that he was on bright Olympus. All the immortals saw he, and her he loved: then sprang towards her, but gazed back upon “the stranger of dark tresses,” and was again unfaithful. Then on they “passed toward the Galaxy,” and his companion melted from his side.

Down, down he came, down, down again to earth, and found the Indian maid. “Pan will bid us live in peace, in love and peace among his forest wildernesses.” Thus Endymion “strove by fancies vain and crude to clear his briered path to some tranquillity;” but no such peace would come. The stranger sat all sorrowful, forbidden by “heavenly powers” to be his love. Peona finds them both; and tells that “on this very night will be a hym-

ning up to Cynthia, queen of light ;” both the maidens leave with promise to meet at “golden eve,” in “those holy groves that silent are behind great Dian’s temple.”

Eve came gently on ; vesper twinkled sweetly, and Endymion met Peona and the stranger :—

Then he embraced her, and his lady’s hand
Pressed, saying : “Sister, I would have command,
If it were heaven’s will, on our sad fate.”
At which that dark-eyed stranger stood elate,
And said, in a new voice, but sweet as love,
To Endymion’s amaze : “By Cupid’s dove,
And so thou shalt ! and by the lily truth
Of my own breast thou shalt, beloved youth !”
And as she spake, into her face there came
Light as reflected from a silver flame :
Her long black hair swelled ampler, in display
Full golden ; in her eyes a brighter day
Dawned blue, and full of love. Aye, he beheld
Phœbe, his passion ! joyous she upheld
Her lucid bow, continuing thus : “Drear, drear
Has our delaying been ; but foolish fear
Withheld me first ; other decrees of fate ;
And then ’twas fit that from this mortal state
Thou shouldst, my love, by some unlooked-for change
Be spiritualized. Peona, we shall range
These forests, and to thee they safe shall be
As was thy cradle ; hither shalt thou flee
To meet us many a time.” Next Cynthia bright
Peona kissed, and blessed with fair good night ;
Her brother kissed her too, and knelt adown
Before his goddess, in a blissful swoon.
She gave her fair hands to him, and behold,
Before three swiftest kisses he had told,
They vanished far away !—Peona went
Home through the gloomy wood in wonderment.

THOMAS MILLER.

TAKE up the works of this author and you are immediately in the country. This is the fine charm of his writings, they breathe so much of the beauty and luxuriance of our lovely isle. To those indeed who have no sympathy with descriptions of the nooks and corners of our land, he possesses little to interest; but to those young ardent spirits, who love the breath of fields and the open sky of day, there is everything to enchant and thrill.

He is thoroughly English; he knows nothing of balmier lands; sufficient for him, the "low humming of unseen insects in the air," "the solemn tapping of the woodpecker, measuring the intervals of silence," and the "blue-winged jay," as she goes "screaming through the deep umbrage, startled by the harsh sounding of the woodman's strokes;" sufficient for him the meadows of England with their buttercups and daisies.

How pleasantly he talks in that exquisite paper —Home Revisited! How full of meaning is the opening sentence: "The commonest objects become endeared to us by absence; things which we before scarcely deigned to notice are then found to possess strange charms, bringing to the memory

many a forgotten incident, and to the heart many an old emotion, to which they had been dormant for years." And then he tells us of his going back to the home of childhood, and of the old house looking still the same, yet "somehow more venerable," and the "old clock" standing in the old-fashioned kitchen seeming "to have lost that strange clear clicking" which used to greet him in former days: "the gilt balls, which decorate the tall case, were tarnished; the golden worlds into which my fancy had so often conjured them were gone; the light that played around them in other days was dimmed; the sunshine rested upon them no longer;" and then he speaks of the "old mirror," and the "large slate," and the playthings of his youth; his reading away the soft sweet hours in the lonely wood, and his bright joyous holidays. It is a charming essay.

And then that beautiful production on the woods, breathing all their solemn silence: "There is no tranquillity like that which settles upon the solitary forest; the tops of hills are peaceful when they lie far away from town or hamlet, but in the curtained depths of dim glens where no sky is visible, and no outstretched landscape catches the wandering eye, there alone dwells the pure serenity of repose;" breathing all their sounds, "the melancholy murmurs of a brook hardly heard above the faint whistle of the tall reeds by which it is hidden;" "the lone coo of a mournful ring-dove, that scarcely awakens the sleeping air;" "the humming bee, as it drowsily buzzes from bell to bell;" "the de-

scending leaf, that falls dancingly down upon the stream ;” “the pattering rain that treads with silver feet” from branch to branch ; “the shrill chirp of the flower-buried grasshopper ;” breathing all their thousand sweetesses, and tinged with their thousand shades.

And how thrilling and exhilarating is the chapter opening with the bugle-note, “Morning, and on the hills !” How full of sunny music ! But he is even more sweetly pastoral, and teems with finer associations when he talks about the old English park ; how eloquent he grows when alluding to “its long lines of moss-covered walls extending for miles, built of small bricks, and upheld against the crumbling finger of time by massy buttresses.” But we must give the passage entire, so full is it of beauty :—

We look through the huge iron gates that swing upon the tall stone pillars, each crowned with a couchant greyhound, and see the long carriage-path overhung with its noble row of elms, and here and there a sunbeam bursting through the branches, and making the yellow gravel glitter like gold. Farther down is seen an old fountain pouring its clear stream into a large Conch-shell of granite, while a stony Triton bends above it, as if it were listening to the music-making waters. We hear the low murmuring, and the air around us feels cooler at the sound, as if we felt the silver spray playing upon our cheek. Above the dead-eyed Triton, round whose brow the green ivy has twined, stands a peacock with his gorgeous train expanded, screaming at intervals, and drowning the fountain’s sound. We see the ancient oaks rearing their gnarled arms over the hills and valleys, and extending their shadows to the fern and gorse and golden broom, standing with their burnished helmets in the sunlight. Occasionally we catch a glimpse of some stately swan arching its silver neck and scud-

ding along the broad lake, just descried by the straggling beam that sleeps upon its surface, glittering between the trees above the tall rushes that skirt the margin. Herds of deer are also scattered in picturesque positions, some lifting up their antlered heads, and browsing upon the young branches that fall within their reach, while others lie upon the cool grass beneath the deep umbrage of old trees, or are trooping through the open glades at full speed, now glancing by some winding avenue, then bounding over some distant hillock, and anon lost in the far-off thicket.

We hear the cawing of the rooks as they hover round their airy city, buried in the rich foliage of the elms. The soft coo of the ring-dove comes upon the whispering wind that sweeps lazily by us laden with the perfume of the woodbine, which floats on with that mourning sound. The lowing of kine reaches us from some rich pasture hidden from our sight by the clustering beeches ; we see the long-eared hare nestling on her seat in a tuft of high grass, or the rabbit hopping across some footpath and hastening to its burrow in the sandbank by the young plantation ; and the hawk wheeling above the summit of the gnarled hawthorn, or poising himself over his prey, and then dropping like a plummet from our sight ; while the heron wafts herself above the tops of the tall pines, now seen for a moment sweeping over a sea of branches, then vanishing in the distance, or alighting by the still lake in quest of food. We see portions of the old hall through the openings of the trees ; here a turret arises, towering above the topmost bough of a large oak ; there a stack of chimneys is seen, the blue smoke curling in fantastic wreaths between the foliage ; while glimpses of lawns and shrubberies and grey pillars and glittering windows, and cackling of hens, and the gabbling of ducks, and deep baying of the mastiff, and the low bleating of some pet lamb, tell us that wealth and happiness and beauty, with all pleasant sights and sounds, are embosomed among the tall trees.

Thus Miller's sketches are teeming with generous memories of England's venerable and happy homes : how full is this passage of sweet reminiscences, how clustered round with poetry ! It is equal to any-

thing ever written by those lovers of the country, Howitt, Gilpin, and Mitford. The exquisite History of Selborne does not exceed it in meadow-beauty. All his pages have a “green look;” “he carries with him the true aroma of old forests ; his lines are mottled with rich mosses, and there is a gnarled ruggedness upon the stems of his trees. His waters have a wet look and a pleasing sound about them, and you feel the fresh air play around you while you read. His birds are the free denizens of the fields, and they send their songs so life-like through the covert, that their music rings upon the ear, and you are carried away with his ‘sweet pipings.’” You see “the trailing woodbine blushing along the road-side,” and “the wild cherry sheeted with blossoms;” there are lilacs, beeches, and willows in his writings. Indeed you are shut out from town with its noise and bustle and vanity, and become a dweller in the woods or a wanderer on the hill-tops.

This is his charm ; and for this we dearly love the pastoral poet. It is all of the country, it is all of fields and streams, these writings of his ; they are literally imbued with the freshness and beauty of nature. You feel free in reading him, you see the rustic village ; nay, at times you are sitting in the window of some woodbine cot, and drinking in the breeze that floats languidly by, or else perhaps lying on the grassy banks of a brawling brook, looking upward, in dreamlike mood, on the clear blue sky.

Even the wood-cuts which adorn his books are

replete with this colouring and feeling. They are perfectly his own sketches. How exquisite is that one prefixed to his Summer-day with its rural scenery. There is the steeple of the village church arising heavenward, then the sun is seen dawning on the meadows, and scattering “orient pearls” on every blade of grass, and on the yellow buttercups ; then the stream babbles on so sweetly, while a lover of nature is gazing upon the beautiful landscape from an old stile. And two we have by us now, one representing a dark wood, overarched with green branching foliage, and just shewing a glimmer of light between the mossy trunks. The waggon, loaded with the woodman’s labors, grinds heavily onwards, making the stillness of the lone copse more profoundly striking : the other is almost as beautiful. There stands the thatched cottage embosomed in ash and elm ; at a distance is seen the old church, its spire just peeping upwards from the luxuriant foliage. The stream seems to be without a current, so placid and quiet it looks, so gently does it flow. The boat is moored along the bank against the tall rushes. It appears to be the time of summer : all smiles beneath the sunshine.

But we must give a few illustrations, although we love to dally with this subject ; we love to linger over these pictures of rural peace and quietness without fixing our thoughts particularly on any one. We love to wander amid his sweets, and dream away the “leaden-footed hours,” without stopping to admire this or that to the neglect of the rest. The path is so flowery, the banks are so green, the

river flows so silently along, the air is so fresh, the sky so blue, the sounds so soft and exquisite, that we can but linger and dream—would that we might thus linger and dream for ever !

The description of the stream shall be our prelude :—

How pleasant is a broad stream running through an expanse of meadow-land—a few reeds skirting its banks, with an elder or two hanging over, in the shadow of which some trout has taken up his position ! A fallen tree extends across it even in the same direction as it was blown down one stormy night, and it has never been moved, and the bank is worn away by the passing footsteps ; and half-way out of the water stands a long pole, and this you must reach—if you can—to balance yourself on the rural bridge. You look through the clear crystal, and see the entangled roots and loosened fibres swayed to and fro by the motion of the current. In the centre of the stream, where scarce an eddy moves, lie clusters of white and yellow water-lilies, almost buried amid their large shield-shaped leaves. The white ones look like carved ivory scattered upon the glassy pavement of a palace ; the yellow, like spots of gold enamelled upon a floor of silver. And the primrose water-flag lifts its broad blades of green above the stream, while the gaudy dragon-fly sweeps over its yellow flowers. The tall bulrush too stands high over above all, with its feathered head, like a proud chieftain, only deigning to nod to the wind. And the water-poe has expanded itself at the feet of the long rushes, whose seedy heads hang like tassels in the sunshine. Occasionally a bird will start up from the sedge, and, winging its way between the water-flags, alight in the opposite meadow ; or a frog plunge to the bottom, with a clear short sound ; or a water-rat raise a splash in the stream, then dive into his hole by the bank. Farther up, the black water-hen may be discovered sailing away like a fairy bark through the channels that run between islands of water-lilies, seeming the sole inhabitant of the brook and water-flowers.

How full of life is this sylvan sketch ! You see the meandering stream with its lilies, rustic bridge

and flags ; you almost hear the gurgling of the water, and feel the warm sunshine ! What memories it recalls from the waste of years ; memories of Keel Hall, with its fine wood in which we went a-nutting ; memories of Ashley, where we beheld the silver pond covered with the white lily ; memories of the fields which lie on the road to Trumpington, and through which we used so often to saunter, listening to the whimpling of the brook and the airy notes of the lark and dreaming softly and sweetly of all things :—

Oh, how delightful it is to wander forth into the sweet-smelling fields ; to set one's foot upon nine daisies—a sure test that spring is come : to see meadows lighted with the white flowers ; to watch the sky-lark winging his way to his blue temple in the skies, “singing above, a voice of light :” to hear the blackbird's mellow flute-like voice ringing from some distant covert, among the young beauties of the wood, who are robing themselves for the masque of summer ! All these are sights and sounds calculated to elevate the heart above its puny cares and trifling sorrows, and to throw around it a repose calm and spirit-like as the scene whose beauty hushed its heavings. There is an invisible chord, a golden link of love, between our souls and nature : it is no separate thing, no distinct object, but a yearning affection towards the whole of her works. We love the blue sky, the rolling river, the beautiful flowers, and the green earth ; we are enraptured with the old hills and the hoary forests. The whistling reeds say something soothing to us ; there is a cheering voice in the unseen wind ; and the gurgling brook, as it babbles along, carries with it a melody of other years,—the tones of our playfellows —the gentle voice of a lost mother—or the echo of a sweet tongue that scarcely dared to murmur its love.

But we must close our dream of the green, green things of nature ; we must forget for awhile the harmony of the creation : pleasant have been our

visions, and we linger still, linger, linger with bursting love. However, one other sketch, and we have done ; it is worthy the pencil of Goldsmith, or Washington Irving, so exquisitely is it touched :—

Trees and flowers alone can throw a soft repose around the harsh features of death ; we gaze upon his dwelling—a green and flowery grave in some still sequestered nook, over which droops a beautiful tree, and we feel half in love with the dusky messenger. Look at our own village churchyard, surrounded with elm and sycamore, over which rise the swelling hills, crowned with these lovely woods, and within the sound of the murmuring Trent, all so quiet, that even the dead seem but to sleep beneath the budding hillocks ; and the low-voiced breeze, that sings hushingly over their slumber, creeps along so still, that we almost fancy we can hear the flowers grow which decorate their graves.

JAMES ORTON.

ON our return from the North, and after a weary journey, we found lying on our table The Enthusiast by this author. It was as some golden ray of sunlight amid the darkness of a November day, or as some sweet limpid rill starting up amid the wide sterile desert. Since that lonely evening, he has kindly sent us his other volume, *Excelsior*.

Three features we admire in the volumes. There is first, true and just homage of the genius of his elders. He generously appreciates their excellencies: and acknowledges the debt he owes each and all for their high and lofty and holy teaching. There is next a deep-rooted faith in the Bible. It is still God's Book, the mysterious Oracle of Heaven. It is the one unscathed thing beneath the skies. All else is sullied, a dark stain is on man, and the creation around: on this none. And thirdly, our author is full of hopes and aspirations and yearnings. There opens on his view a time when moments will be as spotless pearls or liquid notes of melody, or faint stirrings of flower-scented winds, or golden sunbeams: when the earth will throw off its burden of sin and burning shame, and become the abode of purity, peace, and joy.

Our author possesses true genius: it is genius which says of Poetry :—

She wears at her girdle the golden keys of Time, Space, and Eternity.

It is genius which says that—

Time is the Sexton of the grand Cathedral of Life.

And the following limnings of poets are touched with the pencil of a fine generous genius :—

Kirke White :

A mournful yew tree, bathed in the gloom of night, dropping his blood-red berries, or drops of melancholic agony over the, to him, tomb-like world.

Coleridge :

One of Turner's most delicious and most mystical moon-lights hangs over and silvers his poetical visions.

Tennyson :

His harp is not strung with strings whose wild loud notes shall first awaken . . . but with silken, silvery, gossamer chords, whose fairy melody is heard only by the delicate spiritual ear.

Byron :

He sails through the firmament of time as a huge black cloud toiling heavily through its pilgrimage, and dropping at intervals large drops of thunder rain, or darting from its bosom annihilating bolts of forked lightning, scathing and scorching the spots on which they fall.

Wilson :

His soul is a lovely azure haze streaked by golden sunbeams, through which the beauties of nature and of human sympathies stream as through a prism, lending to the cold white light of common observation the glowing colours of the rainbow.

Shelley :

Shelley resembles the dim mysterious starlight, where, through the dark blue boundless dome of the sky, his thoughts gleam silently forth, filling its majestic circles with twinkling starry lights, dim only from their distance and loftiness.

Croly :

A christian poet with a powerful genius which throws a sunset splendour over all it falls upon.

Keats :

Keats resembles the moon with all its delicious silverings of light and shade, throwing a heavenly light over every valley, mountain, stream, and forest, over which its saintly beams so lovingly fall ; clothing Nature with a vesture of the loftiest classical beauty, and throwing a gleam of splendour into the dark caves of mind, and over the shattered mountains of the religious creeds, aspirations, and love of the otherwise dim Past.

And lastly, from this glowing volume *Excelsior* : speaking of the Bards of the Bible and of its author, George Gilfillan, he writes :—

It is an altar to the great I AM, piled with golden thoughts and flame-like utterances. Mountain range after range of vast and glowing thought stretch away into the holy land of Heaven, and over all gradually spreads the Night-like majesty of Bible-wisdom till its religious firmament is sanded with the brilliant stars of revelation. . . . As the dead Raffael lay glorified beneath his magnificent picture of The Transfiguration, so may Gilfillan lie with greater glory and more godlike features, beneath the shadow of this grand Temple he has raised to the mighty God whom he loves as a child, but worships as a seraph.

His Enthusiast, or The Straying Angel, is a poem of much beauty, sweetness, and melody. Take the following specimen :—

When spirit sense once more unfurled its wing,
Beneath a mighty Palace dome I lay,
And on its awful grandeur frightened gazed.
Pillars of gem-encrusted gold flew up
And buoyed the azure dome, with gold stars 'bossed.
Here, flowers perennial, in amber vased,
Mixt luscious perfume, with rich scents that rolled
O'er golden lips of censers, thick with gems.

Through richest oriels coloured light fell in,
And filled dim halls with floating gorgeousness,
Tipping with rosy light far gems and gold,
Flashing their beauty like a Night of stars;—
And hung around a sense of love and bliss.
Then like the pearly notes of distant bells,
When on the waves of silence, softly falling,
Through the far chambers of that Palace vast,
I heard a spirit anthem, faintly hymned.—

The Earth-born hies
From his little star,
To rifle the secrets
Of worlds afar !
If his purpose be holy,
He seeks not in vain ;
Yet if but for Pride,
Let him hie back again !
For flowers of Truth
Are withered by sin ;—
And ne'er shall he cull
Their dewdrops within !

But if to enlighten
The darkness of Earth ;
Pale sorrow to brighten,
By Hope's brilliant birth !
Then we yield him the key
Of Truth's luscious bower ;
Where the dewdrops of Wisdom
Fill the cup of each flower.

Both volumes are full of high thoughts, fervent aspirations, manly feelings, beautiful imagery, and a true and lofty genius. Sunlight on his home and hearth !

POLLOK.

A FRIDAY, on the 19th of October, now some fifty years back,—Glasgow, as ever, smoky dull; the citizens begin to stir—ships unload—all bustle, all confusion: the world's wealth is being poured into its close-packed warehouses. Now and then a true soul passes who can see beauty in the fine old cathedral, and who, perhaps, mourns for its almost forgotten anthem. Not a sound there; no liquid melody; no voice of prayer each day: cold and silent is that massive pile.

The day seems no otherwise than yesterday—all goes on the same—the din and hurry of business alone heard. A strange face here and there, perchance; but the rest we know them well—anxious, plodding men. The artizan gazed upwards as he walked to his accustomed toil, and deemed it a fresh and beautiful morn; the student looks out from the college window in High-street, and yearns for his simple kirk and homely manse among the distant hills.

A few miles off, and to-day is not as yesterday. An autumnal sky spreads itself over Moorhouse; that only is the same. Ben Lomond and Ben Ledi look solitary and sublime from the distance: their

summits encircled with mists : God's huge altars once, "when holy were the haunted forest boughs, holy the air, the water, and the fire," and the sacrificial flame flared upwards to the gigantic heavens, and the priestly Druid ministered. The sun just lightens up the glens and dark tarns : the moor is swept over by the October winds—a wild, deep sweep. Sweep, sweep on : there is hope in yonder cottage. The wife, about to become again a mother, wishes the curtain drawn aside, that the golden beams may tremble in. Light in the chamber, and hope, we said.

A boy is born. That family all unknown ; he will not rest so. There will be strange faces ; the face of the Southern and the face of the free. That day has changed it. There is sanctity now on mountain, moor, and glen. The child will become a fearless, lion-hearted man. To-night the stars will twinkle as usual—all silent, all still ; but on earth the first moments of a young immortal will be passing away.

That boy early manifested a love for the wide-spread heavens and the "God-sown world." Amid the sublime solitudes of his native home, his sympathies linked themselves with creation's ever-changing aspect. The gloomy darkness of the lowering storm, and the sullen magnificence of sunset, quickened the manly breathing of his soul. The radiant softness of summer deepened the feeling of awe-wrapt emotion ; morning and evening came, and rolled their harmonies on the ear ; the golden clouds, as they floated in the pure blue sky, were

significant of the earth's glory and the earth's decay ; nor did the sweet tints of the wild heather minister in vain.

Under such training Pollok waxed strong ; he exhibited signs of great ability ; then came the voice of fame : he paused ; was thrilled ; longed to be renowned.

Thus stood his mind, when round him came a cloud.
Slowly and heavily it came, a cloud
Of ills we mention not ; enough to say,
'Twas cold, and dead, impenetrable gloom.
He saw its dark approach, and saw his hopes,
One after one, put out, as nearer still
It drew his soul ; but fainted not at first,
Fainted not soon. He knew the lot of man
Was trouble, and prepared to bear the worst ;
Endure whate'er should come, without a sigh
Endure, and drink, even to the very dregs,
The bitterest cup that Time could measure out ;
And, having done, look up, and ask for more.

He called Philosophy, and with his heart
Reasoned. He called Religion, too, but called
Reluctantly, and therefore was not heard.
Ashamed to be o'ermatched by earthly woes,
He sought, and sought with eye that dimmed apace,
To find some avenue to light, some place
On which to rest a hope ; but sought in vain,
Darker and darker still the darkness grew.
At length he sunk ; and Disappointment stood
His only comforter, and mournfully
Told all was passed. His interest in life,
In being, ceased : and now he seemed to feel,
And shuddered as he felt, his powers of mind
Decaying in the spring-time of his day.
The vigorous weak became ; the clear, obscure ;
Memory gave up her charge ; decision reeled ;
And from her flight Fancy returned, returned
Because she found no nourishment abroad.

The blue heavens withered ; and the moon and sun,
And all the stars, and the green earth, and morn
And evening withered ; and the eyes, and smiles,
And faces of all men and women, withered,
Withered to him ; and all the universe,
Like something which had been, appeared, but now
Was dead, and mouldering fast away. He tried
No more to hope, wished to forget his vow,
Wished to forget his harp ; then ceased to wish.
That was his last ; enjoyment now was done.
He had no hope, no wish, and scarce a fear.
Of being sensible, and sensible
Of loss, he as some atom seemed, which God
Had made superfluously, and needed not
To build creation with ; but back again
To nothing threw, and left it in the void,
With everlasting sense that once it was.

Oh ! who can tell what days, what nights he spent,
Of tideless, waveless, sailless, shoreless woe !
And who can tell how many, glorious once,
To others and themselves of promise full,
Conducted to this pass of human thought,
This wilderness of intellectual death,
Wasted, and pined, and vanished from the earth,
Leaving no vestige of memorial there !

But “ God passes by in mercy ; ” henceforth his energies are consecrated to creation’s Lord : the cloud rolls for ever away ; the faces of friend and kindred grow beautiful again. The skies, the stars, speak more eloquently ; the sun and moon gleam yet with a brighter lustre ; the earth glistens in the early dawn—the green and many-tinctured earth. His mind is renewed ; the Spirit of the living Jehovah sprinkles it with the waters of regeneration ; he bows himself at the throne ; he determines to minister in the temple.

Pollok now enters the university : it is the year

1817. Arise, O sun ! and shine ; a gigantic soul is passing through the court-yard of the Glasgow Alumni—once again a true man treads her pavement. Now little known, little cared for, but by the home of infancy : ah, reader, he bears a father's and a mother's blessing. His eyes are softened into tears ; the world is all before him. But that solitary spirit will become one of Scotia's noblest sons ; he will be rugged Caledonia's pride, therefore arise, O sun ! and shine. He mixes among its members ; he gazes on each countenance, he marks it ; it is his own for ever. One no doubt thinks how he was disappointed. As Luther went to Rome, so does Pollok come to the Alma Mater. He fancies that he will find an assemblage of fine aspiring spirits. Alas, no !—hallowed associations, feelings, and principles, are little regarded. He sits one evening alone in his room ; the sun is sinking in the horizon ; gloomy clouds, and as magnificent as gloomy, are rolling onwards to the western sky ; the steps of humanity become less and less frequent ; the din of the city is hushed into a sweet, strange sound ; he arises and looks out of the window ; his large eye flashes ; all his fancies, vows, and assignations throng back ; they give life, and inextinguishable thoughts again. He had wept, as he sadly imagined, over their cold remains. But they exist : yea, he feels strong in the knowledge that all at Eaglesham are talking of Robert : with the parental blessing, he dare hope. Hope on, fond youth ; thou shalt not hope in vain ! He forgets the unkind remarks of students ; he is once

more the heroic soul. There is something tangible, something worth living for in the universe.

But loneliness is felt most on the Sabbath. He paces by the Canongate after the solemn services of the quiet day, and there is an agonizing solitariness within his soul ; he paces onwards—homewards, we were going to say—would that it were so!—but to his cold rooms. There are no smiling faces to greet him, no warm and tender welcome, no converse of love, no artless chat of children—all is chilly, all is dismal. He passes many a blessed home, and beholds through the window the happy inmates gathered around the blazing hearth, and his thoughts wander to his own cottage upon the distant moor. How sweet it were to be on that far-off spot once again, and gaze upwards on its mantling heavens. So he wishes ; but there must be work and stern denial now. Thus, college-life is oftentimes one dark scene in the spirit's toil : so Milton and Jeremy Taylor found it.

One morning, and this Pollok is seen strolling towards Lochgoine : it is situated in a beautiful part of Ayrshire. He rambles on, his spirit thinking deeply of the Covenanters. This house was once their haunt ; during the persecution of 1660, hither they retired. Strange that men should be hunted like beasts of prey because they choose to offer heart-worship to the Lord ! Twelve times did their foes search every room—in vain : Providence took care of those who forgot not the lily's lesson. His steps are tending hitherwards ; his dreams are of those ancient men—his sympathies are linked with

their holy cause—he already is amongst them. It is a calm, soft-like hour ; no breeze is stirring—no leaf trembles. A vast assemblage stands listening to the legate of the Eternal. There he is : the fine, clear sky, and the quiet dell, and the luxuriant foliage, and the jagged rocks, and the heather, and the blue-bell, and the wild flowers, complements of himself. The scene is in perfect keeping : in Christ's fair creation, Christ's fair name is sounded. A hymn arises : it is the *Martyrs'* : it is rolled upwards to the open heavens : its echo comes back in gentle murmurings. A signal sounds ; the multitude has fled.

With many a scene of this description playing before his fancy, he reaches the hallowed building : he enters. The flag carried aloft at the battle of Bothwell-bridge, Captain Paton's sword, the Bible which he gave to Mrs. Paton on the scaffold, rivet his attention ; they are engirt with a thousand expressions, deep-toned, of liberty and manly bearing. The poet catches the divine sounds ; the light of freedom glances from his eye.

Often would he stroll thither, and as often did he return invigorated and strengthened. Visions of old beamed on his spirit, not to enervate, but to brace and elevate. Whilst attending the various courses of appointed studies, he drank in the rich mellifluous strains of England's highest bards. The paper which he read at this time before a literary society is redolent with poetic beauty.

Pollok's college life is at last ended. He enters the Divinity Hall. At the end of his twenty-fourth

year, he stands up with his first discourse: inattention is marked on nearly every countenance. "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners!" The assertion falls unheeded. A true soul, he speaks poetically: his hearers at once fix on him their gaze: he proceeds; smiles are seen; laughter is heard: he moves not; goes on undisturbed. The insult provokes not yet the fire of his lips; he enumerates the blessings consequent on Adam's obedience: the scoffs continue: he changes his position, and utters, with a look of stern indignation, "Had sin not entered our world, no idiot smile would have gathered on the face of folly to put out of countenance the man of worth!" It is a note of the Course of Time's deep music.

Some ten or eleven months after this, we find Pollok giving an address on preaching to a small society of friends. The poet is easily distinguished throughout the whole. The conclusion is beautiful:—"While we would have the preacher to be plain and simple in language, always to preach Christ and him crucified, never to lose sight of the great atonement, and the truths connected with it, we would have him to give a tongue to the sun and the moon, and every star of heaven, to speak forth our Saviour's praise,—we would have him to bring forth the beasts of the forest and cast them down to do homage at the cross of Christ,—we would have him command the ocean to be silent, and listen to the still small voice of the gospel,—we would have him make the four winds messengers of the word of God,—we would have him make

the mountain bow down to the footsteps of the Redeemer, and the valley rise up and meet his goings,—we would have him teach the oak and the plane to spread their shelter, and the sweetbriar and the hawthorn to breathe their incense in the lowly course of the meek and humble Jesus,—we would have him teach every flower of the field—the violet, the rose, and the lily—to adorn the garden of Gethsemane; make the ravens of Heaven bring an offering to the Holy One; and instruct the lark and the nightingale, and every daughter of heavenly song, to lift up, with man, hosannas to Him who came from the right hand of the Ancient of Days, to bind up the broken-hearted, and to comfort all that mourn.”

The latter part of 1824 realized Pollok’s ruling desire. He then found a fitting theme for a great poem. The sedate student gave full freedom to the glowing impulses that swept over his heart; henceforth he was no longer confined in a room; its four walls sank away; creation—the bright and magnificent creation stood around: there was infinite range; no prison-airs heard he. He bathed his forehead in the pearly light of Paradise. And Eternity came: it unfolded sublimer realities and more solemn beauty. There was a deeper quietude—a holier hush. Ages poured along; were scrolled backwards; still unruffled infinitude before, unruffled infinitude behind. He beheld the verdant plains of heaven; he tasted their unfading sweets; the dew, when it fell, fell in music; the flowers, as they breathed upwards, breathed silver melody.

He saw angels ; hierarchy above hierarchy, towering in grandeur, with brows resplendent as the rainbow ; and the anthem issued ; the past visioned itself ; time's events gathered their sounds into his song. Nor was the earth forgotten : it stood, blushing as Vesper, amid its sunny hopes, and hallowed peace, and tender whisperings, and rapturous glances, and deep, inexpressible bliss, and constancy, and truth, and dulcet harmonies.

Our poet thus writes to his brother—the letter is dated January 8th, 1825 :—“ Before the new year, I had about three weeks of glorious study. Soaring into the pure ether of eternity, and linking my thoughts to the everlasting throne, I felt the healthy breezes of immortality revive my intellectual nerves, and found a point, unshaken and unthreatened by the rockings and stormings of this world. Blank-verse, the language of assembled gods, the language of eternity, was the form into which my thoughts fell. Some of them, I trust, shall outlive me in this world ; and nothing, I hope, shall make me ashamed to meet them in the next. Thoughts, acquirements, appendages of any kind, that cannot be carried with us out of time into the help and solace of eternity, but must be left, the unredeemed and unredeemable of death, are little worth harbouring about us. It is the everlastingness of a thing that gives it weight and importance ; and surely it is not impossible, even now, to have thoughts and ideas that may be transported over the vale of death, and not be refused the stamp and signature of the Eternal King.

No doubt, the clearest eye must unscale when it comes in view of the uncreated light ; and the purest earthly thought must wash itself before it enters into the holy of holies on high ; but there are different eyes from those which have never tried to see, and there are different thoughts from those which must be exiled for ever beyond the confines of purity.”

And his brother responded with the heart’s warmth. He cheered him amid his many difficulties ; and perhaps we had never heard the solemn music of the poet’s harp had it not been for David’s faithful love. His letter, dated from Auchindinny, May 25, 1826, is one of the noblest in the English language.

On the 24th of March, 1827, the song fell on the public ear : the Course of Time was issued ; it excited marked attention ; it stamped once and for ever greatness on the genius of its author. The poet saw and heard, and his heart was grateful. His wish—his morning wish was accomplished. His work was done ; the laurel-wreath graced his manly brow.

On Thursday, the 3rd of May, he preached his first sermon : it commanded great interest. His appearance was solemn ; his countenance altogether unearthly : long study had given him an ashy palleness ; but the fire of his eyes remained. He sacrificed in Jehovah’s presence. Thrice afterwards he ministered ; then came illness : he waxed feeble ; health gradually forsook him. He thought Italy’s balmy air might recruit his wasted strength ; he

prepared to leave his fatherland ; and on the 15th of August he bade an adieu, an everlasting adieu, to its hallowed coast. On his arrival at Southampton, he took up his residence, until he could depart for the golden southern sky ; but sickness increased ; his nights were restless ; death was on the wing ; it soon entered. In Christ he trusted, hoped, and confided : he felt that all was safety and security there. On the 18th of September he breathed his last on earth.

There is something peculiarly touching in all this. Just emerged from obscurity into resplendent day—taken with sickness—leaves his own fine country—endures the pangs of death far from kinsmen and friends—one sister only present. We almost think that it would have been sweeter to have died surrounded by his own hills, and beside his own kindred ; and yet perhaps it was more merciful as it was. The bitter agony of separation was over. He had bidden farewell to all he loved ; he had done with sublunary things ; he was in a more immediate communion with the Everlasting ; that Power walked with him through death's dark and cheerless valley.

Two days afterwards, his mortal remains were entombed in the churchyard of Millbrook. They lie not far from the sea-shore ; a spot suitable for a poet ; the waves, softened by distance, murmur a dirge-like melody. In a land of strangers he lies, far off from his kindred and the home of his love. Over the grave stands an obelisk of granite, bearing, with the dates of his birth and death,

this inscription : “The grave of Robert Pollok, A.M., author of the ‘Course of Time :’ his immortal poem is his monument. Erected by admirers of his genius.”

Some may deem his death premature : but what if he accomplished the work of a long life ?—what if he compressed the feelings, experience, and labours of fourscore years into twenty-eight ?—call we death then premature ? The story of his life gives a deeper interest to his song ; to strike the lyre with a master’s hand was his ruling passion. He had written an everlasting remembrance : he had climbed nearly to the summit of Parnassus ; only a few above him : he had plucked the laurel —its leaf unfading : what more ? He had tasted every joy and sorrow of this lower region ; he had lived and known all the witcheries of creation, and all the diviner witcheries of thought ; he had traced the golden links of that chain which binds the universe to its God : he had seen the lovely form that excelleth, and drank in the delicious warblings of the highest heaven : what more ? Quaffed he not the cup of life ? what further to complete his knowledge ?—He had attained to all its science and all its lore ; he had communed with the mighty, the great, the gigantic—and he had been with Jesus, and the Sanctifier had descended ; he looked up at Vesper, twinkling ever brightly in evening’s shadowy hemisphere, and lo, it was the work of His fingers : he gazed on the golden corn-field, “ripe already to harvest,” as the wind swept over it, and beheld in its waving sunshine the goodness of Him

who listened to the cry of the raven. Illustrations of His Providence teemed everywhere : he felt that he was cared for and loved by the Deity ; he viewed all the actions and all the concerns of time in the light of revelation ; he ascended daily in the scale of moral worth ; he approached nearer the throne ; he arrived closer to the empurpled empyrean. His heart—his brave and sincere heart—clothed in the unsullied purity of the Anointed, awaited the summons to enter the world of spirits. What wonder, then, if the angels came ?—what marvel if he winged his flight with them to the fair city of eternity ?

The Course of Time is a magnificent monument of the author's genius ; it abounds in splendid passages ; it teems with descriptions which, for pathos and sweetness, grandeur and sublimity, have rarely been surpassed. He has, indeed, none of the luscious beauty of Keats, nor the fine finish of Campbell, nor the oriental gorgeousness of Croly, nor the rich classical melody of Tennyson, nor the gigantic wildness of Edward Irving : his paintings remind one often of Nat Lee. He has, too, much of the dark gloom and powerful energy of Blair, but his lines are not so firm or compact ; his style is peculiarly his own. Instead of light effusions, the youthful bard pours forth the secrets of the invisible world ; he breaks down the partition wall which men have raised to shut out the daylight of that land ; he shadows forth the miseries of hell ; he opens up the glories of heaven ; and around these he has entwined the flowers and the weeds of earth.

Many of his speculations have been pronounced rash and daring. We cannot agree with such criticism.

Pollok, indeed, thought for himself: no faint-hearted soul he. But he had a guide—a divine Being. He trusted not in his own strength; nor did he lean on man's: he examined the Oracles with the Spirit's teaching: he found therein full and frequent descriptions of the blessed world: he clung to them: they were reality. It might have been that the whole of Christendom was ranged against him; but Christendom's greatest sons were forsaken for the Holiest. Rightly so! False men cling to high names, and hide themselves behind these semblances; but this Pollok was not one of them.

One of our poet's distinguishing features is, the high estimate he gives to moral greatness. This excites our astonishment the more, since students worship little else than intellectual: the intellect is their idol: at its shrine they bow and do homage; on its altar, immolate themselves. Pollok entered the heathen temple—beheld the pompous rites—listened to the magnificent, outbursting hymn; but it arose not to the Supreme. He saw through the splendid and radiant semblance: true men ever see clearly—no film on their eyes. Moral greatness was alone good, alone holy—it sanctified all; without it, everything was worthless and unhallowed. He departed from the marble pile, and proclaimed the oracle, that “man is great only as he is good.”

Pollok, however, is much too dark and gloomy;

he delights in terrible paintings : hell's blackness is the great theme ; he has here room for his imagination—it is his fancy's highest play. Even the beautiful things of earth are somewhat dimmed and blighted, and the affections, too, are looked upon with a jealous eye. Why is this ? Surely religion does not militate against them ? Mother, love thy babe ; it is not sin ; and when at eventide it comes to thee, and throws its little arms around thy neck, and hides its little head within thy bosom, tell it of heaven—that heaven is as soft and as sweet as a mother's love—and it will never forget. Thou canst not love it too well. Cling to it—cleave to it ; caress it ever ; and it will pour all its affections, and all its cares, and all its desires into thine own lap. Mother, love thy child !—to love it is not idolatry. That fond babe, with its clear blue eye, and ruby lips, and rosy cheeks, and open countenance, and full-hearted tenderness, and gushing feelings, and confiding trust, will learn the delicious quiet of heaven on thy arms and on thy bosom. There let it repose ; and when the anxieties of life press sore, and friends prove faithless, and kinsmen and dearest objects die, will it remember that heaven is a haven sweeter and more secure than even a mother's love. And what exquisite joy for thee ! In cherishing thine infant, thou dost reap some foretaste of the coming bliss ; to thee it is a symbol. Entwine thy purest affections around it, and bathe it ever with the bursting emotions of thy soul : love it ; there is not, there cannot be idolatry in loving thy child ! Why should the yearning heart be

constrained and straitened with the censure of excessive love : censure, away ! Oh, Jesu, whom man despised, and whom man insulted, was nursed on a mother's knee, and "drew milk as sweet as charity" from a mother's breast!—and he whom none cared for, and whom all rejected, enlivened the lonely watchings of his mother and charmed away her toils with his lispings and his prattle. Prattle on, dear babe, and lean on the bosom of her who brought you forth, and deem that the better land is all as beautiful and all as true as the throbings of that maternal breast : and, mothers, love your little ones ; they will remind you of the clime where the wild olive, and the cedar, and the violet grow ; where the birds sing their hymn in the twilight hour ; where the sound of running waters soothes the spirit to a serene repose ; where the moon and the stars gleam down upon its blessed intelligences, and where all is sacred and inviolate tenderness. Mother, love thy child !

Religion is not dark—religion is not gloomy. Young man, who now gazest on that sweet being sitting by thy side, and deemest her all too good for earth, think not that religion will make you dull—will blight your new-sprung bliss ; think not that it will shadow that face, which beams so confidently and so tenderly into yours, with austerity and sternness ; think not that, when ye walk out at eventide beneath the foliage of majestic trees, it will give a harshness to that voice which now sounds more delicious than the enchanting and mystic melody of the twilight hour ; think not that

it will withdraw that affection which is riveted upon you for ever, and give instead thereof a reserved attachment. The faith of Jesus does not this ; and herein it proves its divine origin and commission. Love that being still ; and this faith will but make that face more beautiful, and that bosom more constant, and that affection more hallowed, and that confiding trust more confiding still, and that heart more throbbing, and yearning, and devoted.

It is much to be lamented that religion is so often portrayed in such dark and gloomy colours, as if we had no right to enjoy the beauty and the tenderness of this lower world ; as if the deepest and the purest affections of the breast were unhallowed and unholy. Religion is not thus scowling —is not thus a black, thunderous cloud ; it is rather the blue empyrean, and the soft, mellowed light in which float all things lovely and all things fair. We read—“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the Church.” What means this “even as?” What signifies this example of love? Does it speak of shackles and chains, fetters and bondage? Was he afraid of loving too much? Was it not rather his glory that he loved so like a God? Did he count it sinful and idolatry to give all his being and all his existence to an unchanging and everlasting love? Was it not the consummation of his magnificent character that he loved so well and so truly? And shall we talk of wrong in loving those united to us by so near and precious a relationship? Shall we enchain our deep, deep feelings? Shall we give them boundaries? Shall

we place landmarks? Shall we compress the dilated breast? Shall we dim the Deity within us? Did Christ thus? Ah! there was no coldness and reserve in him; shall there be any in us?

Call religion, and repose on her sweet, soft bosom: dedicate thyself to Jesus; it will not make thee dull; it cannot bedim thy ecstatic joy. How can it, when its essence is love; its rule, love; its precepts, love; its influence, love; its beamings, love? Can love, then, render one gloomy? No! It will gild the hill-tops with golden light, and cast radiant beauty into the vales below. Go then, and give thyself to the meek, the gentle Saviour; his tenderness is softer than the balmy breath of a summer's eventide; and thy love for friend and kin will deepen and strengthen until it becomes as profound as the vast tide of existence, or the infinite range of being.

And, indeed, this love to Jesus does but call into finer play the other loves of the soul; just in the same manner as the love of a friend quickens and deepens the love to wife and child. The more we love, the more we may love; each affection is, however, different and distinct from the rest; they never commingle, but they receive a sevenfold lustre from each other; just as some woodland dell is beautiful, but it puts on a more winning grace when the slant rays of the morning sun light up its dark and luxuriant foliage.

The purest affection of the human breast is the love of God as revealed in the Mediator; and it is this which renovates the soul, and casts on the

once dismal chaos gleams of the coming glory. But whilst we acknowledge this, we see no necessity to disparage the other attachments which swell in the spirit of man ; that is never raised by the censuring of these ; Christ did not thus ; he knew what was in us, and he acted as became the divine Original.

Our love to parent, and friend, and kin may be deep ; our love to Jesus may be deep ; and it does not necessarily follow that any one of these will cast a shade upon its fellows. Folly to think so ! Dive below the surface, and we shall see, that instead of clashing with each other, they but gleam beauty and radiant sweetness. Do the colours of the rainbow look discordant ?—blend they not so softly and so delicately, yet each keeping its own distinct hue, that if one were gone, all the rest would suffer in their loveliness ? And the first streak in the east, when dawn awakes, doth it not gather much of its brightness from the surrounding twilight and the darkened hemisphere ? Hast thou ever cast thine eye on a bed of flowers, and hast thou not remarked how their varied tints fell into one rich and golden whole ? And in looking back on thy past life, does not every event and every circumstance, however distinct, and however separate, become suffused with the same glowing colouring and the same soft, mellowed grace ? And higher : Do not the attributes of the Eternal, which are infinite and immaculate, pour upon each other a more resplendent splendour and a more exhaustless magnificence ?

So with the affections : to raise one at the expense of another is unwise ; rather cultivate them all ; and each will then breathe a fragrance sweeter than the woodbine at the first glimmer of day, and give forth a more delicious music than the dying fall of an *Æolian* harp, when the sun sinks down ; and undulations softer than the gentle swelling of the bosom when wrapt in blissful dreams ; and a cadence more enchanting than the sigh of sleeping babe ; and a sound more still and richly melodious than when the dew trembles on the early primrose ; and a strain more thrilling than when the calm murmur of the sea breaks on the shore. And the religion of Jesus will throw starlight, and moonlight, and sunlight on them all ; and they shall kindle with a brighter radiance, and glow with a more luscious beauty, and blush with a deeper grace, and speak a language more spiritual than when man turns upwards his eye on the vast heavens, and feels the divinity within !

Young man, love thy wife ! no limit place to that affection ; darken it not with the calumny that it is idolatry ; shackle it not with self-forged fetters ; let it be infinite and boundless ; in it thou shalt find delicious bliss ; it will teach thee of heaven ; it will reveal things unspeakable ; it will open up the fair beauty of that orient clime where all is unfading as the Everlasting ; it will roll music on thine ear ; it will pour unutterable sweets into thy lap ; thy home will beam with loveliness ; it will be a symbol of the everlasting rest. Love her ; cherish her : thy reward will be vast ;—love her ;

cherish her: thy nature will be elevated;—love her; cherish her: thine heart will gush with sublime and imperishable joy. And when this world has wounded thee, and grieved thee, then turn thee to her bosom, and thou shalt find thy heaven of trust and bliss; and soon ye shall both turn to the soft, sweet haven of serene repose. It is not idolatry, this connubial love; thy being will become perfected and ennobled. What! idolatry to love that faithful creature who has reposed her all of earthly happiness, and much of her heavenly, in your arms? Surely God never meant this. Idolatry! if this be idolatry, we know not what it means. Husband, love thy wife, and behold, in that beautiful eye and fair countenance, gleams of the coming sunshine. Oh, shame to term the heart's fondest feelings, and the heart's fondest love, idolatry!—it is not so. We complain not of this: ye cannot love parents, and wife, and child too much: sacrilege to love them with a weak, limited, and vacillating faith!—We admire you for regarding those beings with an infinitude of love; we delight to witness this,—no coldness, no icy chilliness, for us. But, whilst we glory in such attachments,—mark, spiritual soul, here is the distinction,—we censure you, that with all this exhaustless love, and all these exquisite feelings, and all these trembling emotions you have no eye and no heart for the Creator; we blame you, not that you love child, and deem its innocent face so fair; not that you love wife, and deem her so fondly precious; not that you love parents, and deem

them the sweetest semblance of the divine ; but that, with all this bursting affection and unutterable clinging, you have no regard for the altogether lovely and the altogether beautiful : that whilst your eye can melt into tears, and your heart soften into sensibility at the sight of those “whom God has given,” you have no tear and no sensibility for the bountiful Giver himself.

We are not to look jealously upon the affections and the sanctities of home ; the Oracles do not require this : we are to give up our sins, our evil thoughts, our love to the moral debased world, our pride of life, our unhallowed hearts : we are to become holy, meek, gentle ; we are to be as God—like God ; Jesus is to be in us ; we are to do his work ; abound in his labours. Temptation after temptation must be overcome ; assault after assault beaten off : the Spirit is to sanctify, to spiritualize : but we are to enjoy God’s mercies ; we are to reap happiness from those things he has given ; we are to be fond and fonder parents ; we are to be dutiful and more dutiful children ; we are to be loving and more loving husbands ; we are to be tender and more tender wives ; we are to be faithful and more faithful friends ; we are to be all that is “true, and honest, and lovely, and of good report ;” and truer, and more honest, and more lovely, and of better report. Religion, instead of snapping these asunder, gives them a loftier and higher import ; irradiates with a sunnier beam : it teaches, inculcates, commands the enforcement of every one ; it kindles

all its angers and fulminates all its wrath at their non-performance.

We do not believe there is such a thing as idolatry in these: the Bible never yet said so; and what are man's words? Idolatry is the paying of that regard and worship to a semblance, or simulacrum, which belongs only and simply to the thing or being it personates. Now, we love a child as a child; we love a wife as a wife; we love them for what they are, and not for what they are not. Idolatry is something distinct and different: it loves and worships the star, or flower, or painted wood, because it deems the flower, or star, or painted wood to be God; hence it is idolatry, semblancy, falsity.

God accuses us not of loving wife or child, but of not loving Him: How could he so accuse us, since the love to Him but increases and deepens our love to them? One would think, if we could love these objects too much, that when we became lovers of Jehovah, our regard would be lessened. But is this the case? We can tell you that those hours in which we have been the most spiritually-minded, and when the very being seemed to float in a profound ocean of unruffled, infinite, and delicious love, and when the Eternal seemed above, beneath, and around us, and when earth, sea, and sky seemed to be lighted up with a soft golden glory, and when the air teemed with angelic hymns, and the clouds breathed out divine harmonies, and when the body itself seemed etherealized, and in

sweetest accordance with the highest aspirations of the soul, even then have we beheld a chaster beauty and a fairer loveliness in the relationships of earth. And in like manner, when we have been far off from God, when we have erred and strayed like lost sheep, and when iniquity has prevailed against us as a tide, have we beheld less enchanting grace in the hallowed ties of our nature. How is this? If it be wrong to love with an infinite affection, then why, when holiest and purest, do we love the most?

An idol is that which prevents our entire love to the Eternal; but we know that the relationships of earth expand and deepen that affection. Wherefore, then, the wrong?—whence the sin? “Covetousness is idolatry.” Why? Because, where it reigns, the love of God cannot. But is it so with the tenderness of our hearts? Oh, when we have been the most in communion with the Everlasting, then have we felt a more bursting, throbbing, unutterable fondness for wife and child and kinsmen. Spirit! wilt thou shackle, wilt thou repress thy gushing attachments?

Pollok, too, has fallen into the error so common amongst us, that God saw nothing in human nature, when fallen, to move his love; that we then became so corrupt and so polluted, that in us there was nothing which bound and united us to the Creator. We were sinful; we were a chaos of blasphemy, rebellion, impurity; we were as the broken cistern, and as the overthrown pillar. All this we acknowledge: we do well in so doing. But in this dim, black confusion, there were ever and anon streaks

of a coming dawn, a breathing of life-giving winds : amidst all this deep spiritual degeneracy, there was ever and anon some thought arising to the Creator ; some inquiry how could man be just with God : amidst this clashing of interests, there was ever and anon some true and mighty principle struggling into being, some rays of the Divine. There were moments when man was sick of guilt, and pined for purity ; when he knelt himself down upon some sea-rock, and as the sun came bursting forth in all his magnificence upon the wide ocean, prayed for something higher and something holier ; when he wept over sin ; when he mourned his iniquity. If this were not the case what means the poet of antiquity in his fine majestic hymn to the Supreme, exclaiming, “For we are his offspring ?” and in an earlier age, what means another bard, in addressing the same divinity, exclaiming, “For thou hearest a man everywhere in pain ?” and in later times, what means the altar raised beneath the beautiful Attic sky, and in the refined city itself, to the Unknown God, if they do not tell us that man is ever seeking in what way he may be reconciled to Jehovah, regain his lost favour, and obtain back the ancient covenant of peace and blessedness ?

Hast thou never beheld, O reader, the beautiful work of thy fingers destroyed, and hast thou not gathered up the fragments, and although it was broken into a thousand pieces, and its once beautiful form for ever lost, and that which was so exquisite a gem, and so often gazed upon with delight, and so frequently admired, has been shiv-

ered and splintered into shapeless atoms, yet hast thou not gathered up every part with a care and a gentleness never known before, and with feelings of love and yearnings of tender regard hast thou not placed it in thy cabinet of all precious things? Because it had forgotten its former grace, was it therefore without one sweet association, one pleasant memory?—rather, did it not win thy pity, and find its way to thy swelling heart?

And so God: he created us in his own bright image; we were his glory, his delight; he caused the balmy breath to breathe upon us, and outstretched a serene, cerulean canopy above; but we soon broke ourselves into a million chaotic substances, and where once reigned perfect beauty and unsullied love, naught was seen but disorder and impurity; and where once arose the high hymn of praise, issued the clashing of hoarse rebellion and the defiance of an enemy. Ah, would not God stoop and gather up the shattered being? had he no pity on that which he himself adorned with so much grace and so much loveliness? Think you there was no yearning of the heart over us—nothing in us to draw his attention and regard? Yes, there was; and in this very fact, that we were the creation of his own hands. True, we were despoiled, yet were there relentings, and strivings, and utterings, and sighings after our pristine nature: and God did gather up the broken fragments, and with them made he a new man, fairer, and loftier, and brighter than him who erst walked in Eden's garden amid its untainted sweets.

Again, look on earth. Hast thou never seen, hast thou never heard of a love which has stood unquenched and undimmed amid the severest rebuffs and the cruellest desertion ? Hast thou never seen it in one who, after giving her all of happiness and her all of being into the hands of the man who promised to cherish for ever, has been left desolate and alone ; and who thus, left to pine in her cold and cheerless dwelling, has still loved on ; and amid all his brutal and unfeeling conduct, hast thou not beheld her clinging with a fonder and a tenderer affection ? We see, we hear it daily. It is true, that he whom she loves is ungenerous and unkind ; but she loves him for what once he was. The days that are past, and in which were seen his smile and thrilling tenderness, and in which was heard the liquid language of his lips, often return ; nay, they are ever with her : and for what he was then—for his gentleness, his affection, his kindness, does she love him now—will she cleave to him for ever !

And if this sublime affection is found, and found often, in the creature, shall it not be found in the Creator ? Can he not love us for what once we were ? May he not gaze on those peaceful hours, and that unruffled quietude, and that undisturbed repose, which some thousands of years back awoke the happiness of the first pair ? Is the hymn of Eden forgotten ? Is the promise of everlasting love and truth, though broken, unremembered ? Is its purity unrecorded ?

The human spirit, blasted as it is by the east

wind, and burnt up by the scorching sun, and eaten into by the worm, still loves an object for its past beauty and its past truth ; and shall not the Holy One, who is said to be love, regard us with affection for what once we were ? Was there no tie between us—nothing in us which moved his heart ? no breathings that touched, no relentings which melted ? no aspirations after good ? no cries after perfection ? no strivings to bring back the lost relationship ? Aye, there was a light gleaming on our darkness like the darting forth of a sun-ray upon the billowy and surging ocean when heaving beneath a black, brooding storm ! This was enough ; the clouds could be rolled away, and the deep and perilous waters become gently rippling under the fair, clear heavens.

To return. A few quotations from the Course of Time, and we have done. The following, on the abode of the wicked, is one of the most powerful and terrific in the volume. When our poet came to depict the dark scenery of the world of woe, he seemed to lose all strength ; he felt that he was treading on the same ground with Milton and Dante ; he trembled lest he should be found wanting ; he tried to write, but could not ; he swept the lyre, but no sound was emitted ; he touched again, but still no strain,—all thoughts seemed too poor, all paintings too dull : his imagination failed —his faculties gave way. The hour was eventide —the time for solemn fancies ; these departed. Inspiration left, hope fled, energy reeled, darkness came ; the stars were quenched in blackness ; and

then did Pollok cast himself upon his knees, and pray for the assistance of the Supreme. He retired to rest : in the slumbers of the night he dreamed ; hell was disclosed ; we have the vision :—

Equipped and bent for heaven, I left yon world,
My native seat, which scarce your eye can reach,
Rolling around her central sun, far out
On utmost verge of light : but first to see
What lay beyond the visible creation,
Strong curiosity my flight impelled.
Long was my way, and strange. I passed the bounds
Which God doth set to light, and life, and love ;
Where darkness meets with day—where order meets
Disorder, dreadful, waste and wild ; and down
The dark, eternal, uncreated night
Ventured alone. Long, long on rapid wing
I sailed through empty, nameless regions vast,
Where utter nothing dwells, unformed and void.
There neither eye, nor ear, nor any sense
Of being most acute, finds object ; there
For aught external still you search in vain.
Try touch, or sight, or smell ; try what you will,
You strangely find naught but yourself alone.
But why should I in words attempt to tell
What that is like, which is and yet is not ?
This past, my path descending, led me still
O'er unclaimed continents of desert gloom
Immense, where gravitation, shifting, turns
The other way ; and to some dread, unknown,
Infernal centre downwards weighs ; and now,
Far travelled from the edge of darkness, far
As from that glorious mount of God, to light's
Remotest limb, dire sights I saw, dire sounds
I heard ; and suddenly, before my eye
A wall of fiery adamant sprung up,
Wall, mountainous, tremendous, flaming high
Above all flight of hope. I paused and looked ;
And saw, where'er I looked upon that mound,
Sad figures traced in fire, not motionless,

But imitating life. One I remarked
Attentively; but how shall I describe
What naught resembles else my eye hath seen?
Of worm or serpent kind it something looked,
But monstrous, with a thousand snaky heads,
Eyed each with double orbs of glaring wrath;
And with as many tails, that twisted out
In horrid revolution, tipped with stings;
And all its mouths, that wide and darkly gaped,
And breathed most poisonous breath, had each a sting,
Forked, and long, and venomous, and sharp;
And in its writhings infinite, it grasped,
Malignantly, what seemed a heart, swollen, black,
And quivering with torture most intense;
And still the heart, with anguish throbbing high,
Made effort to escape, but could not; for,
Howe'er it turned—and oft it vainly turned—
These complicated foldings held it fast.
And still the monstrous beast, with sting of head
Or tail transpierced it, bleeding evermore.
What this could image, much I searched to know;
And while I stood and gazed, and wondered long,
A voice, from whence I knew not, for no one
I saw, distinctly whispered in my ear
These words: "This is the worm that never dies."

Fast by the side of this unsightly thing
Another was portrayed more hideous still;
Who sees it once, shall wish to see't no more:
For ever undescribed let it remain!
Only this much I may or can unfold:
Far out it thrust a dart, that might have made
The knees of terror quake, and on it hung,
Within the triple barbs, a being, pierced
Through soul and body both. Of heavenly make
Original the being seemed, but fallen,
And worn and wasted with enormous woe.
And still around the everlasting lance
It writhed convulsed, and uttered mimic groans:
And tried and wished, and ever tried and wished
To die: but could not die. Oh! horrid sight!
I trembling gazed, and listened, and heard this voice:

Approach my ear : " This is eternal death."

Nor these alone : upon that burning wall
In horrible emblazonry, were limned
All shapes, all forms, all modes of wretchedness,
And agony, and grief, and desperate woe.
And prominent in characters of fire,

Where'er the eye could light, these words you read,
" Who comes this way behold, and fear to sin ! "

Amazed I stood ; and thought such imagery
Foretold within a dangerous abode.

But yet to see the worst, a wish arose :

For Virtue, by the holy seal of God,
Accredited and stamped, immortal all,
And all invulnerable, fears no hurt.

As easy as my wish, as rapidly,
I through the horrid rampart passed, unscathed
And unopposed ; and, poised on steady wing,
I hovering gazed. Eternal Justice ! Sons
Of God ! tell me, if ye can tell, what then
I saw—what then I heard ! Wide was the place,
And deep as wide, and ruinous as deep.

Beneath, I saw a lake of burning fire,
With tempest tossed perpetually ; and still
The waves of fiery darkness 'gainst the rocks
Of dark damnation broke, and music made
Of melancholy sort ; and overhead

And all around, wind warred with wind, storm howled
To storm, and lightning, forked-lightning crossed,
And thunder answered thunder,—muttering sounds
Of sullen wrath, and far as sight could pierce,
Or down descend in caves of hopeless depth,
Through all that dungeon of unfading fire,
I saw most miserable beings walk,
Burning continually, yet unconsumed ;
For ever wasting, yet enduring still ;
Dying perpetually, yet never dead.

Some wandered lonely in the desert flames,
And some, in fell encounter, fiercely met,
With curses loud and blasphemous, that made
The cheek of darkness pale ; and as they fought
And cursed, and gnashed their teeth, and wished to die,

Their hollow eyes did utter streams of woe.
And there were groans that ended not, and sighs
That always sighed, and tears that ever wept,
And ever fell, but not in Mercy's sight.
And Sorrow, and Repentance, and Despair
Among them walked ; and to their thirsty lips
Presented frequent cups of burning gall.
And as I listened, I heard these beings curse
Almighty God, and curse the Lamb, and curse
The earth, the resurrection morn ; and seek,
And ever vainly seek, for utter death !
And to their everlasting anguish still,
The thunders from above responding spoke
These words, which, through the caverns of perdition
Forlornly echoing, fell on every ear :
“ Ye knew your duty, but ye did it not.”
And back again recoiled a deeper groan :
A deeper groan ! oh, what a groan was that !
I waited not, but swift on speediest wing,
With unaccustomed thoughts conversing, back
Retraced my venturous path from dark to light.

Horrible description this, and yet it was the one that gained our childish heart ; we have loved him ever since that hour. We well remember it : we were sitting in a holy home and beneath a blessed roof when the dark picture visioned itself in characters of woe ; we had never heard such deep, wild notes before. Our affections were once and for ever fixed ; he became dearer than a brother ; our enthusiasm was immense ; we read, and read, and never tired. In the loveliest scenes of creation we would talk of Pollok ; in the sweetest eventides, when buttercups and daisies flowered the meadows with beauty, we conversed about our poet ; he was ever new, ever enchanting ; he filled the whole horizon of our thoughts—he influenced every faculty

as a mighty spell ; even at this moment, we feel the subduing witchery of that season. But the passage is, perhaps, the most powerful in the volume, and its intrinsic merits, without any associations, are great : bard never sketched a darker scene, not even he that wrote the immortal line—"Abandon every hope, all ye that enter!"

Pollok's description places him in a strong light. There may be others, wearing the robe of beauty, and scented with rose and hawthorn ; there may be others, whose sweet and silver intonations may please us better, and whose music is more in accordance with the loves, memories and hopes of our nature ; but there is none which exhibits so strikingly the mighty soul of the author ;—there are others, doubtless, over which we linger with dewy eye, and whose soft cadences and delicious warblings remind us of all that is lovely, and pure, and hallowed on earth ; whose descriptions are full of creation's fairest flowers, and most resplendent gems, and deepest quietudes, and holiest calms, and most unruffled peace, and blessed domestic joys ; but there is none which displays our poet in loftier greatness ;—there are others which shadow forth all that is enchanting, and graceful, and even magnificent in nature, which bring before us the grandeur of the ever-rolling universe, which present the sublime principles of Jehovah's kingly government, which sing of redemption's glory ; but none in which we find such signs of gigantic imagination. We are, indeed, melted to woman's tenderness by his sketches of home's unsullied worth ;

we feel acutely his notes of woe ; we are tremblingly alive to their every sigh of sorrow ; we are ravished with his song of Mount Zion, and the undisturbed serenity of that fair land : but in this we feel an awful dread ; it, as it were, brings us to the very brink of the pit, not edged with moss, amaranths and wild violets, but with the loathsome nettle and poisonous hemlock ; and we almost hear its wailings and weepings—everlasting weepings, everlasting wailings.

Not that we agree with Pollok in the truth of his description do we thus admire the sketch ; we rather believe the agony to be mental, and not physical. Were we to describe that abode, we would cast around it every manifestation of God's love, tenderness, and care ; we would give the gentle dew, and the myriad flowers, and the luxuriant trees, and the soft, purling streams, and the quiet solitudes, and the million stars, and the heaving, swelling, rolling ocean, and islands beautiful and bright, and cool eventides, and fresh-scented dawns, and music on every breeze, and birds empurpled and silvered with gorgeous plumage, and "cattle on a thousand hills," and the lowing of the kine, and the melodies of copses, and roads winding along green, grassy valleys, and up the sides of towering mountains ; and there should be the bee and butterfly, and all the sights and sounds of creation ; and their cities should be built of the sapphire stone, the emerald, and the amethyst, and their palaces "bastioned with pyramids of glowing gold ;" and all should be magnificent with excess-

sive light. But we would gratify every unholy passion—every impure lust ; no restraint should be there. We would give them up to do their own wills and their own desires ; there should be war, and minstrelsy, and dancing ; and lasciviousness should play her part ; and cruelty should sit enthroned, and all good should depart, and all hallowed feeling be for ever banished. They should feel conscious that they were without God, aliens from his blessed family ; and they should work every evil work ; and some would love, and some would loathe : charity there would be none—tenderness there would be none—peace there would be none : there should be strife, and discord, and everlasting misery, and eternal torture !

But we turn to a fairer scene—a scene of early love :—

It was an eve of autumn's holiest mood ;
The corn-fields, bathed in Cynthia's silver light,
Stood ready for the reaper's gathering hand,
And all the winds slept soundly. Nature seemed,
In silent contemplation, to adore
Its Maker. Now and then, the aged leaf
Fell from its fellows, rustling to the ground ;
And, as it fell, bade man think on his end.
On vale and lake, on wood and mountain high,
With pensive wing outspread, sat heavenly Thought
Conversing with itself. Vesper looked forth
From out her western hermitage, and smiled ;
And up the east, unclouded, rode the moon,
With all her stars, gazing on earth intense,
As if she saw some wonder walking there.

Such was the night, so lovely, still, serene,
When, by a hermit thorn that on the hill
Had seen a hundred flowery ages pass,
A damsel kneeled, to offer up her prayer—

Her prayer nightly offered, nightly heard.
This ancient thorn had been the meeting-place
Of love, before his country's voice had called
The ardent youth to fields of honour, far
Beyond the wave ; and hither now repaired,
Nightly, the maid, by God's all-seeing eye
Seen only, while she sought this boon alone—
Her lover's safety and his quick return.
In holy humble attitude she kneeled,
And to her bosom, fair as moonbeam, pressed
One hand, the other lifted up to heaven.
Her eye, upturned, bright as the star of morn,
As violet meek, excessive ardour streamed,
Wafting away her earnest heart to God.
Her voice, scarce uttered, soft as zephyr sighs
On morning lily's cheek, though soft and low,
Yet heard in heaven, heard at the mercy-seat.
A tear-drop wandered on her lovely face ;
It was a tear of faith and holy fear,
Pure as the drops that hang at dawning time,
On yonder willows, by the stream of life.
On her the moon looked steadfastly ; the stars,
That circle nightly round the eternal throne,
Glanced down, well pleased ; and everlasting love
Gave gracious audience to her prayer sincere.

O had her lover seen her thus alone,
Thus holy, wrestling thus, and all for him !
Nor did he not ; for oftentimes Providence,
With unexpected joy, the fervent prayer
Of faith surprised. Returned from long delay
With glory crowned of righteous actions won,
The sacred thorn, to memory dear, first sought
The youth, and found it at the happy hour,
Just when the damsel kneeled herself to pray.
Wrapped in devotion, pleading with her God,
She saw him not, heard not his foot approach.
All holy images seemed too impure
To emblem her he saw. A seraph kneeled,
Beseeching for his ward, before the throne,
Seemed fittest, pleased him best. Sweet was the thought !

But sweeter still the kind remembrance came,
That she was flesh and blood, formed for himself,
The plighted partner of his future life.
And as they met, embraced, and sat, embowered
In woody chambers of the starry night,
Spirits of love about them ministered,
And God, approving, blessed the holy joy !

Poets have been accused of painting life fairer than it is : their colours, it is thought, have been too bright and beautiful. And on no other subject have they been questioned so much as upon their delineation of the affections. We cannot say that we have any sympathy with such complaints ; we doubt very much if the tints have been too glowing : to our mind, the rays of heaven have not fallen too strongly : their sketches are not flower-scented and sunlit enough ; they do not reach the reality. The throbbing emotion, the bursting soul, the keen sensibility, the rich silence, the tender glance, the rapturous countenance, the beaming expression, the soft, dream-like pressure, the hallowed embrace, the deep thrilling language, the undisturbed and profound peace, the gathering together of all regard around one object, the gentle clinging, the sweet dependence, the sheltering under the wing of love, the vast stretchings into infinitude, the union of spirit—oh, what pencil can shadow these in all their fulness and unutterable blessedness ? The heart is higher, loftier, and holier than the intellect.

And yet there are some who deem it manly to scoff at these divine feelings. Shall the holiest ties be trifled with ? If the spirit loves, there is in-

crease of happiness ; there is sweeter sunlight ; there is softer felicity ; there is more melting bliss ; there is the exaltation of every faculty ; there is the enthronement of every beautiful reality. Love is too sublime to be made the subject of our sport : make ourselves merry with it ?—shame on manhood ! It is a solemn and a sacred thing : the mind which trifles with the theme is lowered in our estimation ; it is the sign of a thoughtless heart. That which is the nearest approach to the Divinity—that which ennobles the intellect—that which expands and elevates the whole moral being—that which dignifies the soul—that which renders creation more exquisitely beautiful, and gives a deeper tinge to its waters, and a deeper blue to its skies, and more magnificent tints to its rising and its setting suns, and envelopes every form and shape of nature in a more spirit-like loveliness, and makes every flower and every tree breathe out a more mellifluous hymn—that which renders home worthy of heaven—that from which the Eternal draws to describe his own feelings and his own emotions towards the children of this estranged orb—shall it excite our merriment ?

We rejoice when the spirit of man loves ; for it is then bracing itself with vigour, and clothing itself with power ; it is the commencement of a diviner existence. It may be, and doubtless is, the fashion among a certain class to trifle with its blessedness. Let it be so ; it has taught us a holier lesson. We may be alone in our view ; and yet we are not alone : the celestial hierarchy is with us,

the Deity himself is with us, all heaven—the beautiful and glorious heaven—is with us. “God is love.” Trifle, then, with love? It was love which made the universe, and cast therein her million stars; it was love which created man: ah! it was love that when that being had erred and strayed far out into the wild, wintry desert of sin, brought him back again to the fold and family of God. The Omnipotent sits on the throne of love; his sovereignty is a rule of love; his presence is the perfection of love. Love beams in every flower, and glitters in every dewdrop. The vast canopy of day whispers of love—its clouds, its showers, its rainbows all breathe out love. Even the storm, which beats so loudly against our windows, and the hurricane which lashes the ocean into fury, tell of love. Love is everywhere; it pervades all existence; it is the highest, holiest, divinest essence.

But take another note of woe; it is the poet’s humour, not ours:—

Our sighs were numerous, and profuse our tears,
For she we lost was lovely, and we loved
Her much. Fresh in our memory, as fresh
As yesterday, is yet the day she died:
It was an April day; and blithely all
The youth of nature leaped beneath the sun,
And promised glorious manhood; and our hearts
Were glad, and round them danced the lightsome blood,
In healthy merriment, when tidings came
A child was born; and tidings came again,
That she who gave it birth was sick to death:
So swift trode sorrow on the heels of joy!
We gathered round her bed, and bent our knees
In fervent supplication to the Throne
Of mercy, and perfumed our prayers with sighs

Sincere, and penitential tears, and looks
Of self-abasement; but we sought to stay
An angel on the earth, a spirit ripe
For heaven; and Mercy, in her love, refused:
Most merciful, as oft, when seeming least!
Most gracious, when she seemed the most to frown!
The room I well remember and the bed
On which she lay, and all the faces, too,
That crowded dark and mournfully around.
Her father there and mother, bending stood;
And down their aged cheeks fell many drops
Of bitterness. Her husband, too, was there,
And brothers, and they wept; her sisters, too,
Did weep, and sorrow comfortless; and I,
Too, wept, though not to weeping given; and all
Within the house was dolorous and sad.
This I remember well; but better still
I do remember, and will ne'er forget,
The dying eye! That eye alone was bright,
And brighter grew as nearer death approached:
As I have seen the gentle little flower
Look fairest in the silver beam which fell
Reflected from the thunder-cloud that soon
Came down, and o'er the desert scattered far
And wide its loveliness. She made a sign
To bring her babe: 'twas brought, and by her placed;
She looked upon its face, that neither smiled,
Nor wept, nor knew who gazed upon't, and laid
Her hand upon its little breast, and sought
For it, with look that seemed to penetrate
The heavens, unutterable blessings, such
As God to dying parents only granted,
For infants left behind them in the world.
"God keep my child!" we heard her say, and heard
No more. The Angel of the Covenant
Was come, and faithful to his promise, stood
Prepared to walk with her through death's dark vale.
And now her eyes grew bright, and brighter still,
Too bright for ours to look upon, suffused
With many tears, and closed without a cloud.

They set as sets the morning star, which goes
Not down behind the darkened west, nor hides
Obscured among the tempests of the sky,
But melts away into the light of heaven.

We have, in our quotations, chosen passages of a pensive cast, because they are more in accordance with the spirit of our poet. There are but few hymns of joy in the volume. In this he is the most perfect contrast to Cowper that we have. Cowper loves the beautiful of creation : Pollok, its sullen grandeur ;—Cowper delights to dwell on mercy : Pollok, on vengeance ;—Cowper lingers over the green slopes of the heavenly paradise : Pollok, over the dreary and dismal plains of woe ;—Cowper's voice is like the mellow tones of the lute : Pollok's, like the broken sounds of the muffled drum ;—Cowper speaks of the clear blue sky, and singing of birds : Pollok, of the lowering thunderstorm, darkening the whole hemisphere into gloom ;—Cowper reminds one of the tenderness of Jesus, and the sunlight radiance of eternal love : Pollok, of the stern mandates of Mount Sinai, and the awful claims of incensed justice ;—Cowper is the silver chime of peace and plenty : Pollok, the solemn knell of the dying and the lost.

CHRISTOPHER SMART.

GENIUS, it would seem, from past and present experience, is subject to manifold changes: to-day prosperous, to-morrow in adversity, appears to be the portion of great intellectual power. While moral worth triumphs over every sullen circumstance, and bends it to its own advantage, intellectual is the sport and prey of every passing breath; it has not in itself the might to quell each storm, and to disperse each tempest-cloud; nor can it endure for any length of time the bright radiant sunshine of favour, without suffering for it in the loss of strength and power.

Moral greatness renders exalted the man, and gives him that whereby he is able to bend all things to his will; intellectual raises, but gives no such talisman. Moral greatness ennobles the creature, assimilates him to the Supreme, places him in a region where the sky is never clouded, and the heavens never dark; intellectual, makes the spirit like some majestic vessel upon a tossing, surging ocean, without ballast, and without pilot.

Great intellect requires greater moral principle, and this has rarely been found in our gigantic men; subject to more than ordinary temptations, they

necessarily need more than ordinary piety. What wonder, then, that so many have been guilty of excesses which sully their glorious names?

Christopher Smart does not, in any degree, lessen the truth of these remarks ; his history tends rather to confirm them : he was born at Shipbourne, in Kent, on the 11th of April, 1722 ; during his boyhood his father died, but, through the kind assistance of some influential friends, he was entered at Pembroke College, Cambridge : how often do we think of his perturbed and broken spirit when pacing its venerable courts ! In his twenty-third year he obtained a fellowship, and soon afterwards became a candidate for the Seatonian prize, in which he was five times successful.

The poems thus produced would not have bestowed immortality on Smart : though there are a few striking lines, yet, upon the whole, they are anything but true poetry.

In 1753, he resigned his fellowship, and married Miss Carnan. From that time his former imprudence became more striking ; but what can we say when insanity was already in the brain ? A strange story his of poverty, unhappiness, and disease ! We desire not to enter into details ; over sorrow we would ever draw the veil. He, indeed, seemed to have some saner moments, but are we quite sure that even in these there was no lurking delirium—no concealed madness ?

Smart's most remarkable production is his Song to David. Part of it was indented, by a key, upon the walls of his prison, where he was confined for

debt. It has some tame passages, but as a whole, it is a great and sublime hymn ; some few of its stanzas are inimitable ; it has no parallel in the language. A grandeur and a splendour characterize this magnificent production. Smart mostly wrote upon his knees—a proof of the poet's dependence on the Eternal. The inspiration of the Most High is in this powerful inscription of praise. The darkness of his circumstances overclouded not even his spirit : at seasons it could vent itself in strains of exquisite beauty and impetuous eloquence.

There is much about his tale that binds all our sympathies to the man. The gloom of his soul—the confusion of his affairs—his insanity—his fervent piety—all link our feelings to the bard : and then, when brought to the lowest degree of misery and degradation, do we behold him towering upwards in the greatness of his intellectual might and hallowed principles of his soul, uttering, as he ascends, the vehement Song to David. When the sunshine of prosperity beamed upon him, when sorrow and despair were unthought of, when his dreams were young and ardent, when his fancy revelled in scenes of quiet happiness, his muse was sickly and weak : but when darkness came, and ruin, and desertion of friends, and clouded intellect, and burning madness, then did he uplift himself in “the greatness of his strength,” and sweep the strings of an immortal lyre. When he stood in the gay hour of youth, “with his blushing honours thick upon him,” his writing wore not the garb of immortality ; but when pale sickness came, and

dark aberration, and anxious care, then he arose, like the eagle in his mightiest glory, and gazed on the sun, in the clear noon-day firmament, awaking his deepest, sweetest, and holiest music.

To account for this we may ever be unable. Perhaps, however, his sorrows and trials opened up a clearer view of the sublime attributes of the Everlasting ; and thus enkindled the enthusiasm, deepened the love, and exalted the intellect of the poet. A just knowledge of the Invisible—the belief in a spiritual and divine influence—the faith that God giveth to those who ask it of him—might have led Smart to the footstool of the Throne where the glory of the Deity would meet his gaze. Nothing tends so much to raise and dignify song as communion with the Unseen. Dependence here is strength ; weakness, might ; broken sounds sweetest melody. Thus Milton rose, and rolled out vast harmonies of tremendous grandeur ; and Cowper breathed such holy hymns, more delicious than, even in the ancient world, issued from harp or lute.

But to the poet : speaking of the melodious harper, he says :—

His muse, bright angel of his verse,
Gives balm for all the thorns that pierce,
For all the pangs that rage :
Blest light still gaining on the gloom,
The more than Michael of his bloom,
The Abishag of his age.

He sang of God, the mighty source
Of all things, the stupendous force,
On which all strength depends ;
From whose right arm, beneath whose eyes,

All period, power, and enterprise
Commences, reigns, and ends.

In the paraphrase of God's command to Moses,
what beauty is not perceptible :—

Tell them "I AM," Jehovah said
To Moses: while earth heard in dread,
And, smitten to the heart,
At once above, beneath, around,
All nature, without voice or sound,
Replied—"O, Lord, thou art."

"All thy works praise thee, O Lord," is the expression of the sweet singer of Israel. With what grace has not our bard amplified the idea in these lines :—

For adoration, incense comes
From bezoar, and Arabian gums,
And from the civet's fur :
But as for prayer, or e'er it faints,
Far better is the breath of saints
Than galbanum or myrrh.

For adoration, all the paths
Of grace are open, all the baths
Of purity refresh ;
And all the rays of glory beam
To deck the man of God's esteem,
Who triumphs o'er the flesh.

But the conclusion of the hymn is in a still finer and richer tone. What exquisite pauses, and then what vehement eloquence, swelling into grandeur :

Sweet is the dew that falls betimes,
And drops upon the leafy limes ;
Sweet Hermon's fragrant air ;
Sweet is the lily's silver bell,
And sweet the wakeful tapers smell,
That watch for early prayer.

Sweet the young nurse, with love intense,
 Which smiles o'er sleeping innocence ;
 Sweet when the lost arrive :
 Sweet the musician's ardour beats,
 While his vague mind's in quest of sweets,
 The choicest flowers to hive.

Sweeter, in all the strains of love,
 The language of thy turtle-dove,
 Paired to thy swelling chord ;
 Sweeter, with every grace endued,
 The glory of thy gratitude,
 Respired unto the Lord.

Strong is the horse upon his speed ;
 Strong in pursuit the rapid glede,
 Which makes at once his game :
 Strong the tall ostrich on the ground ;
 Strong through the turbulence profound
 Shoots xiphias to his aim.

Strong is the lion—like a coal
 His eyeball—like a bastion's mole
 His chest against the foes :
 Strong the gier-eagle on his sail,
 Strong against tide the enormous whale
 Emerges as he goes.

But stronger still in earth and air,
 And in the sea, the man of prayer,
 And far beneath the tide :
 And in the seat to faith assigned,
 Where ask is have, where seek is find,
 Where knock is open wide.

Beauteous the fleet before the gale ;
 Beauteous the multitudes in mail,
 Ranked arms, and crested heads ;
 Beauteous the garden's umbrage mild,
 Walk, water, meditated wild,
 And all the blooming beds.

Beauteous the moon full on the lawn ;
And beauteous when the veil's withdrawn,
 The virgin to her spouse :
Beauteous the temple, decked and filled,
When to the heaven of heavens they build
 Their heart-directed vows.

Beauteous, yea, beauteous more than these,
The shepherd king upon his knees,
 For his momentous trust :
With wish of infinite conceit,
For man, beast, mute, the small and great,
 And prostrate dust to dust.

Glorious the sun in mid career ;
Glorious the assembled fires appear ;
 Glorious the comet's train :
Glorious the trumpet and alarm ;
Glorious the Almighty's stretched-out arm ;
 Glorious the enraptured main :

Glorious the northern lights astream ;
Glorious the song, when God's the theme ;
 Glorious the thunder's roar :
Glorious hosannah from the den ;
Glorious the Catholic Amen ;
 Glorious the martyr's gore :

Glorious, more glorious is the crown
Of Him that brought salvation down,
 By meekness called thy Son ;
Thou that stupendous truth believed,
And now the matchless deed's achieved,
 Determined, dared, and done !

JOHN STEVENSON.

Not much of religious eloquence in these days. We mean, not much of intense spiritual insight into the inner meaning of Christianity. There is a continual sameness ; a continual repetition. Indeed the language uttered by the worshippers of Protestantism has become a settled dialect. It has shaped itself into a peculiar phraseology. It is technical. None but the initiated may understand it. It is learnt by all our preachers. It is not the original expression of the great human heart ; no deep wild cry, no bursting oratory.

There are some exceptions truly : men who have spoken with heart-language ; men whose insight has been clear and deep, and whose utterance has been music. Among these is one who has published a volume of Essays, chiefly on religious topics, and the author of Christ on the Cross.

Of the essayist we speak first. He has broken from the theological expression, and given us a more manly and unshackled breathing of eloquence. His voice is the voice of Israel's prophets ; it bears the majesty of Isaiah in its fearless denunciation of sin, and its adoration of the holy. Thunder-pealing are its accents ; bursting its tones of wrath. It is the inspiration of the Almighty ; his lips have

been touched with a "live coal from off the altar;" his eye has seen mighty visions, and his ear has been opened to the music of heaven.

He is not bound by theologic rule; no imitator is he; none: rather speaks he for himself. And in this he does well. Let him live in this eternal element: see for himself, listen for himself, speak for himself. "The man on whom the soul descends, through whom the soul speaks, alone can teach. Courage, piety, love, wisdom can teach; every man can open his door to these angels, and they shall bring him the gift of tongues. But the man who aims to speak as books enable, as synods use, as the fashion guides, and as interest commands, babbles. Let him hush." Many may dislike this true language, may deem it folly; but every new author, if he writes himself, must be at first despised. He has to mould the public taste to his own; and this requires years and sometimes centuries. Look at those names which are the most brilliant among the modern constellation; thirty years ago, and they were scorned as bright twinkling stars, and looked upon as some misty vapour in the blue immensity. Ever must it be so. To speak as other men, is well; but to speak as one himself thinks and feels, is to be a scoff and derision. Soon, however, the despised becomes the living orator to a million souls. Thus, doubtless, will it be with all that emanates from this writer for a season. But rather than dream over the future, let us look into what has been already done.

We should not have said so much, had not his

essays fully borne out our conclusions. They may have faults, but they are the faults of a fine and lofty spirit. Such faults could not be committed by a common writer. His stale smooth tale could not give utterance to such throbings of the heart ; he speaks the language of little men, and hence he is understood by them and praised. But though there are no such faults found in his volume, the volume itself is a fault. It is not speech ; it is not utterance ; it is not language : it is jargon ; music and soft-lipped indeed it may be, but jargon still, moveless, inert, already passing away.

The faults of our essayist, we say, are the faults of a fine spirit. There is something good in them ; they are not lifeless, they are not dead. We may learn much from them, we may listen to much liquid music. The notes may be broken, but there is melody still ; yea, there is the sound of the richest and most magnificent instrument. A difference truly between the tiny musical box, soft and bird-like, and the splendid bursts of an old untuned organ in some time-worn minster. Such the difference between this work and others which the people praise.

Perhaps this production resembles most some ancient window in "an antique oratory," with the sun gleaming through its aged but rich-stained glass. The colours are diverse ; but they are deep and glowing. There is crimson and blue, as though borrowed from the western day-god in woody districts, and from the wide illimitable heaven above us. Crimson and blue streaming down upon the

still quiet marble, broken here and there by tree or ivy ; but richest, most glorious colouring still, ruby and sapphire gem-lights.

The book is full of oratory ; it is not so much essay as oration. It bears some resemblance to the French divines. It is like the thunder-speech of Massillon and the torrent-utterance of Bourdaloue. No soft note of Fenelon is heard, no liquid music of Saurin ; no, it is the deep burst of Bossuet when wrought up to the highest pitch of eloquence. There is withal beauty as well as power. Scarcely any resemblance does it bear to our English theologians. No classic period of Hall, no elegant paragraph of Atterbury, no silver starlight of Paley, no cold formality of Hugh Blair, no tender sweetness of Alison, no rock-like language of Foster, no simplicity of Doddridge, no pearl-sparkling sentence of Barrow. It is a mingling of the strength of Horsley with the flowery luxuriance of Jeremy Taylor ; a fine eagle-piercing style. There is something of Irving, but there is a something which is truly his own.

He rises into highest and loftiest eloquence when denouncing wickedness ; it is then that the spirit of Israel's God descends and moves his lips with prophetic utterances. His language is deep and piercing ; it is ocean-hymned. There is gigantic energy ; and oftentimes biting sarcasm. Of terrible anathemas, some of his are not the least ; "a great God is in them, and he grows not old." To us his future course is clear, to become the great and mighty reprobate of the world's sin, the living

orator in God's temple. May blessings be upon him and his for ever!

But needs be that we turn our attention to that venerable name which heads our paper ; and yet we could not pass away from speaking of religious literature without noticing the other.

If the one reminds us of richly-stained glass seen in some minster pile, the author of Christ on the Cross no less bespeaks the pure mellowed light, softened and deepened, of early dawn. He has all the still quiet beauty of morn. The light is what we might suppose to beam on the most inviolate purity ; the light that surrounds the throne of the Holiest ; the light that gleamed upon a risen God in the garden of the tomb ; the light that brooded over the Saviour's heart. No tiniest atom there ! All pure, intensely pure.

So with this precious volume. Perhaps it is the purest ever written ; its spirit pure, its expressions pure, its influence pure. You cannot peruse it without feeling that there is a purer atmosphere than that in which we live ; without feeling that none but the pure shall behold the face of God, that none but they whose spirits are washed in the pure fountain of a Redeemer's blood, can ever enter the mansions of the blessed.

Honourable to our hallowed English Church is this exquisite production : honourable that such men minister at her altars. And, indeed, that Church may well glory in her privilege. What names she may count among the brightest, the greatest, the holiest of earth ! And the author of

this book will not be long ere he receives the homage of every one of her sons, whether those sons move among the lowly, or among the titled, coroneted, and crowned of the land.

We said that there seems a light, divine and pure, encircling this exposition ; and what we said we repeat. Its style is beautiful without being cold ; it is elegant without being stiff. It is infinitely preferable to Atterbury or the men of that school. There is something of Thomas Dale, the sparkling pearl-beam of his writings ; but we think it a deeper language.

Melvill it is totally unlike. There is none of the grandeur of Croly, none of the magnificence of Trench, none of the splendour of Montgomery, none of the dogmatical fervour of Christopher Wordsworth ; none. Unlike Chalmers, unlike M'All, unlike Kirwan. But though it possesses none of the distinctive elements of these Christian orators, it has that which is not less glorious. It is what we would call, the eloquence of Jesus ; simple, chaste, but boundlessly expressive : simple, chaste, but carrying deepest and profoundest meaning. It is a heavenly language ; it is the purest language ; white, snow-white language, "the stream that overflowed the star-paved court of heaven, and blanched the purple lily, as fables tell, less white, less pure," and yet not cold as snow, but warm, embracing, and tenderly-loving as the heart of God.

Perhaps it may seem to bear some resemblance to Bishop Horne ; but it has in it, if that be possible, a holier intonation than his.

The twenty-second Psalm is chosen for the exposition. The first portion is dark and gloomy, the second bright and cheering; yet the reader feels no gloom, no darkness, there is a light beaming forth as if from the throne of God.

His theme is the greatest that can employ man's thought, or task his highest faculties. It is the incarnation of perfect love: the incarnation of unblemished purity. In the descent of the Son of God both were united, taintless holiness, and boundless love. All that humanity had ever dreamt of, found its centre in Jesus. Their visions, their longings, their aspirations were more than realized in him. The world had ever yearned after this full embodiment of the pure and hallowed: from the sunset of Eden's pristine beauty, even till this incarnation hour, had its hopes been fixed on love: from the "deep abysmal pollutions" of its heart, had it ever and anon sent its desires forth, and as often had they returned desolate and disappointed. Priests, altars and temples; painting, statuary and poetry, ever pointed to this one divine expectation. The world's throes and tossings had ever and anon subsided, and then had come mourning, lamentation, and despair! Then again had the music of its better being broken forth and it hymned its renewed anticipations, and heaven seemed sweeter and earth fairer in those seasons of the spirit's sunshine. Then at last, when hope had almost failed and the eye of the humble loving one had become almost dim, came the incarnation of the highest affection and the most unsullied purity; and

bound this far-off orb with its way-gone and fatherless children to the Creator and the Redeemer.

And in the coming brightness of the earth's spiritual morn, love will be the great principle, the great and alone necessity there : it will rule, it will quicken, it will vivify ; it will throw a beauty over every occurrence of life. It will burn more brightly than the fire-flame which erst illumined with its odoriferous light the still silent darkness when Zoroaster ministered ; it will burn more brightly than the sacrificial gleam fed daily on the one altar of the Jewish nation, ever pointing to the one offering and the one oblation for sin. Love, that will be our presiding, pervading blessing ; it will be the highest object of our being, ever to progress in love, to tread onwards in love, to look upwards at the cross, the perfect unsullied incarnation of love. Onwards, onwards in love : we shall know no other language but the dulcet language of love ; it will be the lisping of the babe and the full harmonious speech of manhood ; it will be the central attraction of the soul, the master energy of the spirit, the inextinguishable feeling of the heart.

And thus will the world progress in love ; the syren voice, which in days gone by seduced to ruin, will then pour out its fervid syllables in a holy hymn to its Creator ; love and affection will be lavished, to be lavished again in return ; love and affection shall deepen, to become deeper in the giving back. There will be ever-enduring, ever-encircling love ; the homes will be filled with melody, and "the solitary wastes" will glisten

with beauty : it may be oftentimes stormy without, but what heeds it, if all within be as the heaven of our God ?

“ We are all lovers : ” a nobler and higher distinction than that given to the Patriarch in the grey dimness of the breaking day, when the world was in its dawn. And as the Jewish nation had ever in its name, Israel, an incentive to ever-prevailing prayer, so we have a still more exalted monitor in this, of being all one brotherhood of lovers, inasmuch as it is the perfection of heaven’s glory. And hence, should heresy throw its dark mantle over this our England, shall we have the ever-cheering fact of our being all lovers wherewith to oppose the armies of the aliens ; and from our homes in their calm and holy peacefulness, and from our affections in their chaste and cleaving tenderness, shall we gather a whole armoury of weapons wherewith to overcome every form of error and every shape of delusion. Home shall teach us love ; God shall teach us love ; heaven, earth teach but love ; and with love we dare hope and dare pray amid the blasting for a world’s sin, and the darkness of a world’s offence ! Six thousand years, according to the Persian, and Oromasdes shall reign as the universal love and the universal good ; then peace, then quietude, then blessedness for ever !

And, indeed, what is this panting after the full manifestation of love among the sons of men, this longing after universal affection and purity, what is it but the desire for the perfect image of the

Supreme—the realization of that holiness which was created anew in the life of Jesus? And those glimpses of beauty which the eye sees in poetry, and the architect sees in the magnificent pile, and the sculptor sees in the exquisite dream of his imagination, and the painter sees in his golden slumberings, and the husband sees in his clinging wife, and the mother sees in her blushing babe—what are these glimpses but so many revelations of the Highest and the Best? what but so many insights into the character of the All-pure and the All-good? And man does well in loving these; for in so doing—oft indeed it may be unconsciously—he loves and worships the mighty doctrine of the Gospel. Love to these, to all these, is but a part of the same moving and regenerating principle of love to God. It will not, indeed, ransom his spirit from the slavery into which it has long been sold, but it will exert a purifying, and we had almost said a sanctifying energy. Yea, in those dreams of beauty, in those love-lit visions, in those fair creations, in those intense longings after the unblemished good, in those sorrows for the world's spiritual and temporal agony, there is a gigantic influence at work, moulding the soul ever into a finer form, and knitting, if it would, the entire humanity for ever to the Deity.

What greater theme, then, could the minister of the Holiest choose, than this of the incarnation of love and purity? It may be entitled simply Christ on the Cross, but it embraces the whole

subject of the Father's mercy and justice ; the Son's love and obedience.

We know of no holier production, no chaster work, no sweeter hymn ; it is one of the master-pieces of the age, the immortal strain of the church, even this Christ on the Cross. It is the purest and most hallowed song of these later times ; it is destined to live, destined to breathe itself through centuries : you cannot hearken to it without feeling it to be an imperishable harmony to the spirit of holiness. Its language is the language of a mighty one ; its thoughts are the thoughts of an undying soul ; all is masterly ; it stamps greatness on the name of its author ; that name will become venerable, will be as a beacon standing almost lonely amid the dreariness of the present days : how sweetly will its light beam on the future inquirer, and lead him onwards to the land where all is fair, beautiful, and good !

MRS. HENRY TIGHE.

WHERE the wild-deer freely roam stand the silent company of congregated mountains around us. Laving their feet and reflecting their forms spread widely away the silvery lakes, stretching off into the dim and visionary distance where, faintly seen, like nebulous thoughts in a dream, a shadowy band of hills close in the most romantic scene in this picturesque sister-isle. The green and golden tints of autumn light up the broad masses of waving foliage: the distant roar of winds among their branches, like the scarcely heard murmurs of a mighty army: the mellow song of glittering wavelets and the fitful roll of the huge cascade fall on the ear, and the majesty of God's great and glorious universe permeates the soul.

In these self-same scenes did the soul of our poetess revel. In yonder forests may be found the lovely wild-wood mazes, the dark coverts and gleaming streamlets which lend so fresh and breezy a charm to her exquisite song of love. And here, in the beautiful home of our own beloved one, with the holy atmosphere of womanly affection around us, we on this golden autumnal day take up our pen to hazard a limning of this "thing of beauty."

And what more glowing and exhaustless theme than the meanderings of a pure innocent love, with its fresh impulses, its dark pools of transient sorrow overshadowed with the black cypress boughs of doubt and despondency ; and its final outpouring into the bright sunlit valleys of a perfected and blissful union ?

Byron and his school in these later days have wept forth their passionate and agonized songs of disappointed and hopeless love : and Shelley in the like strain, but in a more etherealized melody, has sung his ideal sorrows in the fantastic and mysterious Epipsychidion ; and Campbell struck the deep quivering sounds of woe in that tenderest of all poems, *The Flower of Love lies Bleeding* ; and Milman enamoured with the same sad fate threw a blight over the budding or full-fruited passions of his heroes and heroines in *Fazio*, in the Fall of Jerusalem, and in his glowing *Martyr of Antioch* : and Bulwer in his fine mystical prose-poem *Zanoni*, and Lamartine in his *Raphael*, and even the healthy-minded Barry Cornwall also joined in swelling the long funeral dirge of *Love's Labour Lost*.

Brightly shining above these rose the hopeful stars in the ascendant of the manly Scott ; of Southey's long love pilgrimages finally blest with a happy issue ; of Wilson in that golden vision, *The Isle of Palms* ; of Coleridge in his most delicious Genevieve, and of Moore in many a thrilling song. And James Montgomery, Bryant, and Alford with his sweet calm lays of purifying love, and latterly the jubilant lark-like Mackay in his hopeful and in-

spiring Egeria, these each and all have poured forth healthy and re-vivifying streams of salient song telling of "the bliss, the beauty, and the lavishment" of a perfected union!

Longfellow's truthful and instructive *Evangeline*, maugre its tiresome hexameters, suggests a somewhat dissimilar parallel between it and *Psyche*. There are the same long wanderings, an almost equal variety of picturesque scenery, and the like purifying influences which patience, perseverance, and resignation breathe. But farther the parallel goeth not. *Evangeline* is densely clouded with blackest sorrow, without one ray of hope; whilst *Psyche* has gleams of intense ecstasy breaking through the gloom, and finally the clouds clear away and a broad glorious sunrise of happiness gilds the fate of the lovely heroine. We could have wished that Longfellow had painted in stronger lights that blissful hope of re-union which the Christian sees slant, like a gleaming sunbeam, through the black jaws of the tomb even into the heart of heaven. No certain prospect of such a meeting ever did, or could come except through God's divine Revelation, and it is the undenial duty of a christian poet, like a silvery lamp in a dark cavern, to radiate forth into a world of sorrow the full splendour of the glowing truth.

The poem opens with a fine description of tangled forest-scenery, in which is a murmuring flower-rimmed fountain, on the brink of which the fair forsaken *Psyche*, "the peerless maid of royal lineage born," languidly reclines after her wear-

some wanderings. Then follows by way of episode the cause of her troubles, originating from her beauty and the consequent admiration of all, who forsake the shrine of Venus to do homage to the earthly maiden : the recital of Cupid's enamourment when sent by the Queen of Love to overthrow her hated rival, his artful wiles to save her from the dire resentment, by which she is borne by zephyrs to the Island of Pleasure, and in its enchanted Palace she embraces, when the lamps have expired, her divine and adoring lover.

This magnificent palace of enchantment is thus beautifully described :—

Increasing wonder filled her ravished soul,
For now the pompous portals opened wide,
There, pausing oft, with timid foot she stole [pride,
Through halls high-domed, enriched with sculptured
While gay saloons appeared on either side,
In splendid vista opening to her sight ;
And all with precious gems so beautified,
And furnished with such exquisite delight,
That scarce the beams of heaven emit such lustre bright.

The amethyst was there of violet hue,
And there the topaz shed its golden ray,
The chrysoberyl, and the sapphire blue
As the clear azure of a sunny day,
Or the mild eyes where amorous glances play ;
The snow-white jasper, and the opal's flame,
The blushing ruby, and the agate grey,
And there the gem which bears his luckless name [fame.
Whose death, by Phœbus mourned, ensured him deathless

There the green emerald, there cornelians glow,
And rich carbuncles pour eternal light,
With all that India and Peru can show,
Or Labrador can give so flaming bright

To the charmed mariner's half-dazzled sight :
The coral-paved baths with diamonds blaze ;
And all that can the female heart delight
Of fair attire, the last recess displays,
And all that luxury can ask, her eye surveys.

Now through the hall melodious music stole,
And self-prepared the splendid banquet stands,
Self-poured the nectar sparkles in the bowl,
The lute and viol, touched by unseen hands,
Aid the soft voices of the choral bands ;
O'er the full board a brighter lustre beams
Than Persia's monarch at his feast commands :
For sweet refreshment all inviting seems
To taste celestial food, and pure ambrosial streams.

But when meek Eve hung out her dewy star,
And gently veiled with gradual hand the sky,
Lo ! the bright folding doors retiring far,
Display to Psyche's captivated eye
All that voluptuous ease could e'er supply
To soothe the spirits in serene repose :
Beneath the velvet's purple canopy,
Divinely formed, a downy couch arose,
While alabaster lamps a milky light disclose.

Once more she hears the hymeneal strain ;
Far other voices now attune the lay ;
The swelling sounds approach, awhile remain,
And then retiring faint dissolved away ;
The expiring lamps emit a feebler ray,
And soon in fragrant death extinguished lie :
Then virgin terrors Psyche's soul dismay,
When through the obscuring gloom she naught can spy,
But softly rustling sounds declare some Being nigh.

But Psyche, amidst all her bliss, longs once again to embrace her lost parents, and after many entreaties to remain from her unseen lover, who only visits her under the amorous curtain of night, and many ill forebodings on his part, she departs,

and hence her subsequent sorrows and painful wanderings ensue.

In canto the second we have the verification of her lover's fears. She returns to the paternal mansion, her sisters are cankered with envy at her good fortune, and plot her ruin by filling her with suspicion, proclaiming her lover to be a wicked sorcerer and providing her with a lamp to reveal his alleged hideous features, and a dagger to strike through his heart, if indeed she find him the dread being they describe. She returns once more to her nuptial couch, and in the gloom of midnight when her lover is bathed in delicious sleep, she thus proves the falsity and baseness of their stratagem :

All imperceptible to human touch,
His wings display celestial essence light ;
The clear effulgence of the blaze is such,
The brilliant plumage shines so heavenly bright,
That mortal eyes turn dazzled from the sight ;
A youth he seems in manhood's freshest years ;
Round his fair neck, as clinging with delight,
Each golden curl resplendently appears,
Or shades his darker brow, which grace majestic wears.

Or o'er his guileless front the ringlets bright
Their rays of sunny lustre seem to throw,
That front than polished ivory more white !
His blooming cheeks with deeper blushes glow
Than roses scattered o'er a bed of snow :
While on his lips, distilled in balmy dews,
(Those lips divine, that even in silence know
The heart to touch) persuasion to infuse,
Still hangs a rosy charm that never vainly sues.

The friendly curtain of indulgent sleep
Disclosed not yet his eye's resistless sway,
But from their silky veil there seemed to peep

Some brilliant glances with a softened ray,
Which o'er his features exquisitely play.
And all his polished limbs suffuse with light.
Thus through some narrow space the azure day
Sudden its cheerful rays diffusing bright,
Wide darts its lucid beams, to gild the brow of night.

His fatal arrows and celestial bow
Beside the couch were negligently thrown,
Nor needs the god his dazzling arms to show
His glorious birth; such beauty round him shone
As sure could spring from Beauty's self alone;
The bloom which glowed o'er all of soft desire
Could well proclaim him Beauty's cherished son:
And Beauty's self will oft those charms admire,
And steal his witching smile, his glance's living fire.

Speechless with awe, in transport strangely lost,
Long Psyche stood with fixed adoring eye;
Her limbs immovable, her senses lost
Between amazement, fear, and ecstasy,
She hangs enamoured o'er the deity.
Till from her trembling hand extinguished falls
The fatal lamp—He starts—and suddenly
Tremendous thunders echo through the halls,
While ruin's hideous crash bursts o'er the affrighted walls.

The palace disappears, and the ensnared Psyche becomes a lorn and piteous wanderer. The poem through the remaining cantos pours its current through all the allegorical mazes of the probationary trials of affection, ere its heroine is finally blessed with re-union with Cupid.

Such is a brief outline of the manifold points of interest and beauty decorating the edifice of this fine allegorical poem. If Spencer is the King of allegorical poets who shall deny that Mrs. Tighe is the Queen? The poet who would thread the dim labyrinths of the weird forest of allegory must

possess intellectual powers of a broad class ; a mind capable of spanning a wide field of contemplation at one glance ; an endless fountain of imagination, and a rich golden mine of imagery. Without such qualities allegory must be but a broken childish farce, and the objection so often urged against it, possess some reality. Powerfully handled Allegory is the most charming fictitious method of floating truth into the soul ; by its far-away visionary beauty enchanting the mind, while its moral teachings gently glide into rather than make a forcible and offensive entrance.

And whence came this delightful vision of her lonely hours ? Came it from the rosy bowers of health and happiness ? Was it the ebullition of superabundant earthly happiness ? No : from the white chamber of sickness and from the sighing groves of disappointment came it forth clad in the snowy garments of purity. Listen to her own sweet words :—

Delightful visions of my lonely hours !
Charm of my life and solace of my care !
Oh ! would the muse but lend proportioned powers,
And give me language, equal to declare
The wonders which she bids my fancy share,
When rapt in her to other worlds I fly,
See angel forms unutterably fair,
And hear the inexpressible harmony
That seems to float on air, and warble through the sky.

Might I the swiftly glancing scenes recall !
Bright as the roseate clouds of summer's eve,
The dreams which hold my soul in willing thrall,
And half my visionary days deceive,
Communicable shape might then receive,

And other hearts be ravished with the strain ;
But scarce I seek the airy threads to weave,
When quick confusion mocks the fruitless pain,
And all the fairy forms are vanished from my brain.

No : not all vanished ! Thou hast left the world a rich gallery of bright limnings in this one poem ; thou hast taught in it the whole sweet alphabet of love ; thou hast sung of innocence and its temptations ; of joy and all its entrancing powers ; of sorrow, with its purifying influences ; and of all the deep hidden impulses of a fond woman's heart. Thou hast breathed an immortal song founded on a pagan myth, but thou hast let the tender light of the meek spirit of Christianity shine through all. Adieu, thy earthly sorrows and disappointments are ended, and may thy own apotheosis be now as bright as that thou hymnest of thy beloved Psyche.

Comparatively little is known about Mrs. Tighe considering that she flourished at so recent a date. Her life was a quiet stream lapsing down through a lonely forest to the great ocean of eternity, yet reflecting in its flow the manifold beauties of creation. From vague hints alone we know that domestic, if not conjugal, disappointment was hers ; but private sorrows are sacred, nor shall ours be the hand rudely or thoughtlessly to throw back the holy screen of privacy, which ought to protect those secrets which a too inquisitive public might wish to know, but which both the poetess and the beloved ones she left behind, by their silence, evidently wish should not be revealed.

CHARLES WOLFE.

IN the literary world we find two classes of character, whose career is different, and the nature of whose fame is distinct. We watch the one as they mount the ladder, step by step,—ever patiently onward and upward—till they stand upon the topmost altitude, and the setting sun shines upon them crowned with the spoils of a lifetime of labour. The other glances upon us suddenly. We see not much of their previous history or of their future flight; they seem to have fulfilled their destiny with their advent—with one stroke of the chisel to have carved out for themselves “a name among the nations.” The one is like the azure heaven, welkin-bounded, world-embracing, diversified in its aspect, but complete in its collected majesty: the other resembles a star, a lustrous point; brilliant, but of small compass; shining on, but changeless and still.

Of this latter class was Herbert Knowles, who by one poem gained a lasting fame and a seat among the canonized bards. Such also was Charles Wolfe, whose name is for ever and inseparably connected with *The Burial of Sir John Moore*. Other things he has written, but this stands out in

solitary grandeur as the impersonation of his genius —like a jewel in the centre of a diadem. And a worthy monument it is to embalm the poet's name and to perpetuate a pilgrimage to the poet's tomb. It is complete in all its parts, with the cadence and the close of a strain of music. It is sublime in its simplicity—rigidly liberal in its description of the circumstance it commemorates, and at the same time instinct with the very spirit of Poetry. The corpse of the slain warrior, hurried over the ramparts at midnight by his companions in arms ; the grave hastily dug with bayonets ; the faint gleams of the lantern glancing upon the living and the dead ; the body gently laid down for its long, last rest, wrapped simply in its cloak, the bitter tears of the soldiers the only benison above the grave, and the dull, distant roll of the enemy's guns its only requiem—these, all these constitute a picture as tender and touching as it is soul-stirring and sublime. How infinitely this scene transcends in majesty that wherein we behold a velvet coffin surrounded with all the pomp and circumstance of state ; the triumphal car ; the long-drawn procession ; melancholy dressed out in magnificence ; woe wearying itself with giving the final touch to its adornment and with displaying the splendid accompaniments of its misery.

But a truce to such reflections. The subject of this paper is a theme for our thoughts rather than a subject for our remarks. The minstrel has passed into the unseen world to join the hero of his song : and the shadow of a double death rests

like a wreath of moonlight upon The Burial of Sir John Moore. Peace to the ashes of the Soldier and the Poet.

WORDSWORTH.

WORDSWORTH's poems are remarkable for their clear spirituality : this is their characteristic. Perhaps we may get a better idea of their tone and manner from the material universe. They are not like nature, when the sun first glimmers in the orient, and when there is a fresh awakening of birds and perfumes and a coolness and a sweetness cast around everything : they are not like the time when the king of day glows splendour in the zenith, and when the whole creation welters in golden glory—when every tarn is lighted up, and every forest looks greener verdure, when stillness reigns on moor and mountain : they are not like the dim evening stealing over the universe of God, and giving bewitching softness to every object and sound : no, they remind us of none of these. They have no such features, there is no rich colouring, no orange, blue, and crimson. But there is what is higher, better, and more ethereal. They are like night when the stars come out, and shake the heavens with silvery beauty. You have often looked up, Reader, on those spiritual-glancing worlds, and you have felt them breathe a lofty, nay, a sublime spirituality, pure, clear, bright, and holy ; a spiritu-

ality unsullied, a spirituality hallowed and blessed, piercing into the darkest recesses of the soul, and taking the spirit captive with their untainted and unblemished meaning. This is Wordsworth's poetry : the silver stars beaming down upon thee as "an eye from the depth of immensity." Not early dawn, so dewy and so sweet to the heart, not noon-day with all its magnificence of light, not evening with its tints of loveliness, are illustrative of these poems, but the still silent stars of night pouring down their subtle significance into thine inner shrine.

We think this high spirituality may be discerned in almost every poem. There are indeed some one or two passages which are more deeply tinted with the golden colouring than with this silvery beauty ; but the leading idea one has when laying down his works, after a thorough perusal, is that they are instinct with spirituality ; pure as, and not dissimilar to, that of the stars.

After all that had gone before in the preceding century, the affectation, conceit, bombast, glitter, and show, we needed something simple and beautiful ; we needed the soul once more, and not the mere adorned body. And Cowper in his pure English strains, Coleridge in his dreaminess, Southey, Wilson, and other memorable ones, in their fine and lofty measures, did much to exalt the mind once more to its legitimate sovereignty. They were all different men, sang different hymns, awoke different thoughts ; but all they wrote tended to one great object, even this, of bringing back the spirit to its ancient realm. And perhaps, after

Cowper, Wordsworth's muse has had the greatest influence in achieving the victory; its piercing spirituality and its pure and exquisite language have more or less powerfully worked a change in the minds of our present writers.

Besides this, there is another and perhaps greater good which his poems have produced; indeed it has already been strikingly remarked by one fine spirit of the New World: and that is, the doctrine he has taught or again brought back, of looking into the spirit, and not the literality of a thing. How this pervades all ranks now; and yet it was our poet who first began the movement: until his time the letter was all—so long as that was obeyed, no matter how fared the other. But Wordsworth, like the beautiful and pure-glancing stars of night, pierced deeper the significance of man's heart, and spoke again in giant tones of the workings of the soul.

Indeed this would naturally proceed from his lofty spirituality; it was the necessary consequent, the sequence immediately following. And hence we cannot conceive anything better as a prelude to hearing the mighty hymn of nature, than to listen awhile to the fine spiritual language of our poet. "In the 'sense sublime of something far more deeply interfused,' in the feeling that, behind the forms, hues, and sounds of the material universe, there is something more than meets the external senses, something which defies analysis, undefined and ineffable, which must be felt and perceived by the soul—in this intense spiritualism, mingled with the mildest and sweetest humanity, we see the

influence and acknowledge the power of Wordsworth." No other of the poets of the ancient or modern world ; no other vates of times long gone by or during the present era, ever saw so much in creation : no one ever heard such deep tones of inward meaning. To them nature was beautiful and gorgeous ; but they heard not the inner sounds, saw not the inner visions. At times indeed they caught some consciousness of all this ; but it was not a dweller with them, it was not their attendant spirit.

Now Wordsworth never loses sight of this inward consciousness ; he cannot gaze upon a single flower, cannot look upwards on a single star, without seeing something deeper than other men : take this fine passage on a sea-shell, and observe how strikingly this opinion is borne out :—

I have seen
A curious child, who dwelt upon a tract
Of inland ground, applying to his ear
The convolutions of a smooth-lipped shell ;
To which in silence hushed, his very soul
Listened intensely ; and his countenance soon
Brightened with joy ; for murmurings from within
Were heard sonorous cadences ! whereby,
To his belief, the monitor expressed
Mysterious union with its native sea.
Even such a shell the universe itself
Is to the ear of faith ; and there are times,
I doubt not, when to you it doth impart
Authentic tidings of invisible things ;
Of ebb and flow, and ever-during power ;
And central peace, subsisting at the heart
Of endless agitation.

And again in his noble lines on Tintern Abbey, written if we remember rightly in 1798, this con-

sciousness of some all-pervading spiritual essence is very perceptible :—

For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth ; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh, nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts ; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean, and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man ;
A motion, and a spirit that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.

Like the deep-glancing, spiritual breathing significance of the stars is this ; high and lofty, pure and holy ; looking so brightly down upon the upturned eye, and entering so powerfully into every corner of the heart. “ In this transcendental region of poetry, Wordsworth is rather a listener than a seer. He hears unearthly tones, rather than sees unearthly shapes : the vagueness and indistinctness of the impression which the most beautiful and sublime passages of his works leave upon the mind, is similar to that which is conveyed by the most exquisite music.” And thus it is with the two quotations we have made ; a certain undefined meaning is left on the mind ; but we feel it to be a meaning vast as the universe itself, and as grand as the throne of God.

Indeed subtle music, when most spiritual and intensely piercing, is not unlike star-light ; both

produce a vague feeling of infinity. We seem as it were to cease from existence; to lose our own being. We are rather listeners than speakers. The universe moves round us, and we float amid the stillness or the melody. Every part of the body becomes a sense of hearing, and there is an undefined and limitless feeling of lofty and highest spirituality. Just so is it with these poems: the heart is as strangely moved, and the influence is not less powerful.

As a consequence to all this, there is no other book so well fitted to purify the passions. A polluted heart cannot breathe in this intense spiritual atmosphere; it is a region into which none can enter, who loves not with the holiest affection. Humanity becomes elevated in his pages, and in "the exquisite delicacy of his perceptions of the heart's immunities. There is no grade of life or being, which does not rise in our estimation and love, after it has been consecrated by his feelings. The beauty, dignity, and worth of human nature, are more powerfully impressed upon our minds, after being taught the greatness and tenderness of which it is capable, in the exercise of the most common attributes." And thus does the soul, longing after perfect love and striving to obtain the most hallowed purity, feel that one man has been given to earth in this nineteenth century, who may lead it onwards, and bear it upwards into those realms where spiritual beauty and inviolate affection grow beneath the influence of the Highest and the Best.

SYDNEY YENDYS.

ROME has been the subject of many a song of triumph and many a note of woe:—in her youth, when she sat upon the seven hills like a new-fledged eagle, sunning herself in the eye of heaven; in her full maturity, when she waved her wings above the universe and went forth conquering and to conquer; in the autumn of her splendour, when the clouds began to close—when the long-baffled waves, with steady march, rolled on to cover her; and when, her energies exhausted, her power paralyzed, she tottered on her base, and fell from the foremost place in the firmament, like Lucifer the morning star. Macaulay sings—

Hail to the Grand Asylum,
Hail to the hill-tops seven,
Hail to the fire that burns for aye,
And the shield that fell from Heaven.

He tells us of the dauntless courage and the high resolve, the love of country and the love of home, the affection that burnt like a Vestal-flame in a Roman's heart and the blood that ran like fire along a Roman's veins; how the mystic horsemen fought in the battle by the Lake Régillus, and how good Horatius kept the bridge in the brave days

of old. We hear from Bulwer how Rienzi ruled and how he fought and how he fell, and how all Rome itself was the funeral pile of the last of the Roman Tribunes. Byron, in verses as magnificent and melancholy as the ruins he celebrates, gives us the last act of the mighty drama, the diadem dashed down, the sceptre snapped, the "royalty in ruins :" while Shelley, with a spirit as ethereal as the moonlight, wanders among the shattered battlements and fallen fanes, and touches with his sad and solemn beauty, like flowers upon a warrior's grave, the hoary vestiges of the Imperial City. And now we have another poet discoursing upon the same theme, but striking a different string. "Up for the Cross and Freedom !" The eye is not for ever closed in death, the soul is not for ever departed : it is there yet—it lives—it breathes. The sun ye thought had looked his last upon you from the weeping west shall gather up his glories once again and flash with all the splendour of his prime. Ye thought that Liberty was lost, the toy of fools, the sport of fiends, the fancy-haunting dream of shackled men : but lo ! a beacon-fire in the distance ; it spreads from mount to mount, from height to height, and the red flame flings a lustre on the midnight heavens, and lights up on the earth faces sad, but stern and resolute ; and in the shadow of the buildings that encircled their illustrious forefathers, upon the soil where the Cæsars trod, and beneath the firmament that canopied the Cæsars' kingdom, they swear that Rome shall yet be free.

Vittorio Santo goes forth as a Missionary of Freedom ; devotes himself to the task of rousing up his countrymen and inciting them to shake off the Austrian yoke. And, depend upon it, before a man surrenders himself thus unreservedly to a noble cause, he must count the cost. No holiday game will life be to him, no gentle transit down the stream of Time—no pleasant dwelling with the eyes and smiles of happy children round him—no joyful greeting of kinsfolk—no tranquil resting at the close of life among his old familiar scenes—no peaceful gathering of his ashes to his fathers when his day is done. He must up and arm himself for a conflict such as few can stand. He must “ bear all things, believe all things, hope all things, endure all things.” His must be the forty years’ sojourn in the wilderness, to catch at last, perchance, but a glimpse of the promised land afar off. He must be content to “ sit in the gate and be the heathen’s jest, silent and self-possessed.” He must count upon the curses of the world, the flippancy, the carelessness, the cold contempt of those he would arouse ; the deadly sickness of a bleeding heart, a baffled hope, an enterprise abortive. He must be “ all things to all men :” he must till the barren soil, that yields as harvest naught but thorns and briers ; he must see the flame of enthusiasm leap up and then die out in darkness, like a midnight rocket from a sinking ship ; he must expect to find his passionate appeals fall dead—profitless as dew upon the desert ; he must lead on the forlorn hope and perish in the breach ; he must be the scape-

goat doomed to bear the labour and the toil, “the fastings, the foot wanderings,” the fearful weight of thought and care and anxious expectation.

The world considers such a character a fool. Who, say they, but a madman would sacrifice ease, comfort, respectability for the sake of following the phantom of a distempered brain ; a visionary good which never can be grasped. The world has set up images of clay and fallen down and worshipped them, and the smoke of ten thousand sacrifices has gone up like a frowning cloud, and hangs between earth and heaven, shutting out the blessed light. And when one rises who will only bow before the sacred presence of the Truth ; one with deep vision to detect the counterfeit, and a loud prophet-voice to give his spirit utterance,—when he smites down the idol and standing on its reeking ruins, bids its blinded votaries shake their fetters off—he has to undergo Vittorio Santo’s perils and to share Vittorio Santo’s doom.

But to the Poem, which is a record of the Missionary of Freedom as he pursues his arduous task. We meet him in various disguises, and exercising his influence upon different natures—now smiting upon the “cold, proud, rocky heart” of the worldling, now flashing out his thoughts like lightning upon the careless crowd : teaching the minstrels in their own souls’ language the noblest theme that can inspire their song ; and evoking from the depths of woman’s gentle nature that mild but spiritual splendour which is the crowning glory of a great cause, like the crescent on the brow of

night, Time would fail us were we to expatiate upon each several scene, we must therefore content ourselves with presenting one or two extracts and introducing a few comments:

The opening of the Poem strikes us as being very powerfully conceived. The sun is setting and his last streaks of glory are lighting up the heavens, the "purple heavens" of Rome. They touch with all their sad and solemn beauty the cramped and fettered limbs of her who once was mistress of the world. They flit among the towers and battlements which flash the splendour back no more, but receive the sunshine shudderingly, and with a fearful air, like a prisoner through the grated window of his cell: and still the bright beams come and go as they were wont to do, and seem to wonder why they meet not with the olden welcome. Upon an ancient battle-field a band of youths and maidens meet; they sing and dance although their land is a desolation and themselves but slaves:—they dance upon the spot where their great fathers fought and bled to bind another chaplet round the laurelled brows of what was then their *Country*. The Missionary approaches, disguised as a monk, and bids them, stop, they dance upon a grave—the grave that holds his Mother! They yield to his solicitations and withdraw a space: he follows and begs them to forgive his vehemence, and bids them listen how he loved his Mother:—

She loved me, nurst me,
And fed my soul with light. Morning and Even,

Praying, I sent that soul into her eyes,
 And knew what Heaven was though I was a child.
 I grew in stature and she grew in goodness.
 I was a grave child ; looking on her taught me
 To love the beautiful : and I had thoughts
 Of Paradise, when other men have hardly
 Look'd out of doors on earth. (Alas ! alas !
 That I have also learn'd to look on earth
 When other men see Heaven.) I toiled, but ever,
 As I became more holy, she seem'd holier ;
 Even as when climbing mountain-tops the sky
 Grows ampler, higher, purer as ye rise.

And then he tells them how strange robbers seized her, bound her, while he and all her other children denied her in her agony ; counted out the gold that bought her pangs ; and when she lifted up her shackled hands and prayed forgiveness for them—struck her ! The wellnigh quenched but still existing spirit of his auditors is roused by this tale of violence, and with execrations they attempt to kill him, when he bids them stand off for they are partners in the wrong and sharers in the unhallowed gain : that his Mother is their Mother :—

Her name is ROME. Look round,
 And see those features which the sun himself
 Can hardly leave for fondness. Look upon
 Her mountain bosom, where the very sky
 Beholds with passion : and with the last proud
 Imperial sorrow of dejected empire,
 She wraps the purple round her outraged breast,
 And even in fetters cannot be a slave.

And then he launches into a long and eloquent harangue : he dresses up the past in all its ancient pomp, as sunset streaming through stained windows lights up the dust-dimmed statues of ancestral

rulers : he shews them their present state, a life in death—a mockery of existence—“a broken mirror, which the glass in every fragment multiplies :” and looking forward, with a prophet’s vision he evokes the phantoms of the future, the glories nebulous as yet, but destined to become the stars of earth—the fixed and flashing diadems upon the brow of Time. Then by his Country’s wrongs,—

By her eternal youth,
And coëternal, utterless dishonour,
Her toils, her stripes, her agonies, her scars—
And her undying beauty—
By her long agony and bloody sweat,
Her passion of a thousand years, her glory,
Her pride, her shame, her worlds subdued and lost,
He swears She shall be free !

Alas ! the heartless slaves have stolen away one by one, and when the poor enthusiast looks to find an answering echo to his great appeal, he is alone with the grass and the ruins and the broad blue sky and the soft wind of heaven. And yet not quite alone : for one of the band of revellers, a Roman maiden, has been attracted, spell-bound by the words that have fallen, like flakes of fire from a burst bomb-shell, from Vittorio Santo’s tongue : and now she timidly approaches him and asks if there be no office in the great work which Rome’s daughters can fill—no services which they can render to their common mother. A mighty change has passed upon her spirit in these few brief moments : the missionary, all unconscious, held the master-key of her affections, and now she is his in life and death.

Alas ! the love of women, it is known
To be a lovely and a fearful thing;
All that they have upon that die is thrown.—

She knows he has entered upon a perilous enterprise—that he carries his life in his hand—but she will surrender fortune, fame, friends, every thing to be his follower, to execute his orders, and to live within the shadow of his presence. But what can she do? What part in the drama can she sustain? Woman cannot grasp an abstract idea. This Rome, this Country, this impersonation of the frowning ruins which she saw around but bewildered her: she wanted to observe some glance of “human nature in the idol’s eyes”—some touch of human feeling in the Queen they strove to reinstate—some symbol of humanity upon the banners of the host. It was Rome she loved personified in Rome’s deliverer: it was Santo’s wild and witching words that woke the music from her heart-strings, and so she strives to do his will, to prove herself not unworthy of her leader. And nobly does she execute her mission: Vittorio is imprisoned by a libertine young lord, Francesca purchases his freedom at the price of herself, and “in her superb high loveliness, whose every look enhanced the ransom,” begs—

Another maiden hour for prayer and tears.
Francesca wore a poniard. She is now
A maid for ever.

The poet has displayed a very high degree of talent in the conception of this character. The labyrinthine mazes of passion are developed with a

master hand. The dazzling, blinding rush of fresh thoughts and feelings evoked mysteriously like the fabled well-spring of Helicon from the heart of the young Italian girl: the moments of doubt, suspense, hesitation: the conflict between fear and love—the fear of offending, of being cast off as useless, of being but a drag upon the chariot-wheels of the emancipator: the love which has dawned suddenly upon her like an Oriental sunrise and which she knows cannot perish but with her existence—the love which would be contented with the humblest post in his great enterprise: the set determination to do the wishes of her master—and the woman's weakness asking for some tangible reality, some symbol of the divinity she is to serve—some star to twinkle with a human radiance on what, to her, would else be but one broad and blinding blue—the still, intense communings with her own spirit when she learns that *he* is doomed to die by “the greatest libertine in Milan”—the shudderings of soul as she contemplates her scheme for his liberation, and her last act of glorious self-forgetfulness, when she accomplishes her object, and baffling the base hopes of the tyrant, dies, and in dying shows the greatness of a woman's heart, the unsullied lustre of a woman's love. There is to us something inexpressibly touching in this portrait, so pure, so exalted, yet so true to nature; something which appeals to our best feelings, and nobly vindicates the noble origin of our common humanity. And it is not merely a fine idea of the poet, a beautiful creation of the fancy with a rain-

bow's brilliancy and a rainbow's unsubstantial life : it is the personification of a great fact, a special instance of the love which lies about us like the grass upon the meadows. True, the sacrifices woman has to make now are not what they were then, but though the light has come down from the mountains to the valleys—no more a beacon but a household fire—it still exists. Ten thousand silent witnesses are standing round us of the fact, more eloquent in their silence. There are sacrifices offered up every day within our ken as noble as the Roman girl's, and the more we contemplate and admire them the better will our lives become. We cannot bear the vulgar hand which rudely tears away the veil that hides so many sacred scenes ; but we give honour to the man who shows us Woman in her noble nature, her generous devotion of herself to others ; for we feel he gives an impulse to our spirit, subdues our miserable selfishness, inspires us with a hopeful and a healthy spirit, lightens our burden in this lingering life-journey, and lifts us nearer Heaven !

Thou little child,

Thy mother's joy, thy father's hope—thou bright,
Pure dwelling where two fond hearts keep their gladness—
Thou little potentate of love, who comest
With solemn sweet dominion to the old,
Who see thee in thy merry fancies charged
With the grave embassage of that dear past,
When they were young like thee—thou vindication
Of God—thou living witness against all men
Who have been babes—thou everlasting promise
Which no man keeps—thou portrait of our nature,
Which in despair and pride we scorn and worship—

Thou household-god, whom no iconoclast
Hath broken!—

That strain falls on us like a snow-flake on a fevered lip: Childhood gleams on us once again—those early days when we were innocent and happy, when earth with its flowers and sunshine seemed a Paradise which would never pass away—when the moon and the stars were a mystery, and we believed that God was up, far away in the great blue heaven—when we felt as secure in the domestic circle, as Adam did within the “cherubim-defended battlements” of Eden. Childhood! Before the serpent drew his trail across our path and dimmed the lustre which it takes a life-long labour to regain—before we tasted of the Trees of Life and Knowledge and found them dust and ashes in our mouth—“Trees of death and madness.” An immeasurable gulf divides us from that blessed time—we have passed from out that dream-land where we were supremely happy in our ignorance—we have plunged into the fiery furnace of the world and taken part in its toils and throbings and restless heaving passions. We have felt the fever-strife of existence—the elements which constitute at once the blessing and the bane of manhood. Many a hard lesson have we learned, many an agonizing thought has maddened our brain, and many a wild woe has swept across our heart-strings and struck out harsh discord. Love has looked upon us with her heavenly eyes, like a fairy from a fountain, and then died away in bubbling music, leaving us longing to follow her, but not knowing whither.

Fame, Fortune, all the wreckers' lights the world hangs out to tempt poor mortals to destruction on its reefs and shoals, have met us. Death has thrown his shadow on our path and muffled in his mantle those we called our own. And then in some still moment—some hour when we are sitting silently over our lonely fireside, the ghosts of our early days appear like “gleams of a remoter world”—old thoughts, old feelings, old associations come to life again—then, gazing on the laughing landscape we have left for ever, the golden sunrise which has gathered to a burning heat, the fresh young corn-blade which has matured through many a storm and sunbeam till it bows beneath the weight of its own age and longs for the sickle:—who has not *sometimes* wished he was a child again? *Sometimes* the wish steals on us when the white-robed past confronts the sin-stained present and aggravates its hue by contrast: but life was breathed into the frame of each that he might answer a purpose, and we must ever Onward! Knowledge is power though it be stamped into the spirit with a burning brand: and he acts nobly who girds himself up for action. There may be tears for him and throbings of the heart and passionate sad voices from the past, there may be solitude and silence—the solitude of a being friendless in a peopled world: but let him pass on with a resolved but stricken spirit, believing that the path he treads is that of duty and the goal is God; and he shall find that knowledge purified by faith is better than unconscious innocence: his shall be

the crystal calmness of the current that has passed the rapid and the precipice and gone to rest in some sequestered spot, the mirror of the Heaven that hangs above it.

Let us glance for a moment at the closing scene. The Monk has fulfilled his mission, the task which was appointed him he has accomplished: and now prisoned, condemned, sentenced to die on the morrow, he knows his hour has come. A number of his partizans are gathered in the dungeon to bid him farewell, to hear his parting words, to listen to the last instructions of their leader ere he passes from them for ever and leaves them to carry on the cause alone. It is a solemn and a critical moment. He is standing in the shadow of death and on the brink of the unseen world: the stormy past lies behind him like the dashing ocean in the wake of the bark that nears the haven. He has stemmed the flood and grappled with the fury of the whirlwind. He has lived among the strife of elements, the war of deadly passions. He had to kindle the first feeble watch-fire and fan its faint and sickly flame: he had to seek materials to work upon and then to mould them to his purpose: he had to teach the ignorant, to stimulate the faint-hearted, to cheer the wavering, to check the undisciplined ardour of the over-zealous—and all alone. But now his voice is softened and a calm-like sunset rests upon his noble features.

Let us brighten

This last best hour with thoughts that, shining through
To-morrow's tears, shall set in our worst cloud
The bow of promise.

He puts away from him now the sound of war, the shock of arms, the noise of hosts, the banners and the blazoned ensigns: and he endeavours to instil into the minds of his followers a knowledge of their higher duty, of a more difficult but nobler task which may be theirs. He bids them—

Learn a prophet's duty :

For this cause is he born, and for this cause,
For this cause comes he to the world,—*to bear
Witness.*—

Truly, as his audience thought, 'tis a hard saying, who shall hear it? It is comparatively easy when the commander says, "Up and at them," to charge down the hill upon the enemy, like the life-guards at Waterloo: but it is a greater and a hundred-fold more difficult task to stand as those guards stood for seven mortal hours upon the eminence without stirring a step or firing a shot! It is a gallant thing to fight with the free and the brave in defence of our country, our shrines, our hearth-stones, and our fathers' sepulchres—action animates and prevents the spirit drooping; companions in arms, though they be few, incite us on: we fling fear, doubt, irresolution to the winds—and death is indifferent to us, for we know that glory decks the hero's bier if it does not bind his brow. But *to bear witness!*—

Speak, speak thy message;

The world runs post for thee. The good by nature,
The bad by fate;—whom the avenging gods
Having condemned, have first demented. Know
By virtue of that madness they are thine.
Lay-brothers working where the sanctity
Of thine high office comes not. Savage friends

Who, scattering in their wrath thy beacon, light
The fire that clears the wilderness. Unconscious
Disciples, writing up the martyr's title
In Hebrew, Greek, and Latin on his cross.
Love him who loves thee ; his sweet love hath bought
A place in Heaven. But love him more who hates,
For he dares hell to serve thee. Pray for him
Who hears thee gladly ; it shall be remembered
On high. But, martyr ! count thy debt the greater
To the reviler ; *he* hath bought thy triumph
With his own soul. In all thy toils forget not
That whoso sheddeth his life's blood for thee
Is a good lover ; but thy great apostle,
Thy ministering spirit, thy spell-bound
World-working giant, thy head hierophant
And everlasting high priest, is that sinner
Who sheds thine own.

To bear witness ! what a world of meaning lies hidden in these few words : how many of the grandest elements of human nature it requires to mould a character like this. Every man values the honest hearty good word of his neighbours ; and there are associations gathered round the heart of each of us which it is impossible to efface. To be estranged from those we have lived with and loved, from infancy,—to pass from under the shadow of the faith that has fostered us—to look upon old sights, old haunts, familiar scenes, and find they are but fiends to mock us with a memory of what once was—to see contempt and scorn assume the place where love was wont to reign—to know that the affections we prized more than life are changed to wormwood,—to watch our tried and trusted friends deliberately range themselves in the foe-

men's ranks—to have the harrowing conviction burned in upon the soul that we must go on now alone—go along the path we have chosen, and forego all the pleasures on which we counted to render existence durable—these, *these* things try the temper and the tone of spirit—these constitute a frightful and a fiery ordeal at which human nature shudders. And yet all this must frequently be undergone for the cause of Truth. The alternative is a terrible one and many waver: but such have not the elements of real greatness in them, the qualities which constitute one who must bear Witness. The world has its laws and customs, its usages and ordinances, and woe to the man who sets himself in opposition to these. The world has its idols, its creed, its rule of faith—woe to the man who rises and declares its worship blasphemy—its creed a falsehood—its rule of faith a damnable delusion. Woe! truly: but unutterable woe would it be if these men did not rise up ever and anon, to smite the lazy blood into the cheeks of humanity; to exorcise the demon that directs the rabid multitude; to breathe a holier feeling through a land defaced by blood and crime. They are the pioneers of Freedom, the vanguard of the hosts of Truth. And their fate is to be reviled and ridiculed—blasphemed and buffeted—tortured body and soul with all the ingenuity of cruelty. Well—so it is, and so it will be: they have counted the cost; their death-smile is the calm of conquest; and—

They flee far
To a sunnier strand :
And follow Love's folding star
To the evening land.

Vittorio Santo is one of these—and now his last hour has come. He has to take a final look at that cause which he has watched alone from its cradle : which he has reared amid ten thousand obstacles, and guided through ten thousand dangers : he is leaving it in the hands of his followers, and with all the solemnity of sorrow, with all the majesty of a man sublime in suffering and crowned with the diadem of death, he endeavours to form their minds, to instil into them those great principles which have regulated his own career. He gives them a glimpse of the higher mysteries, and strives to stimulate their souls to pierce the mist which hides them from the common ken. He labours to communicate to them that strong, calm, deep, earnest feeling which is an ark of refuge to a persecuted cause, and still on every cloud that either frowns or falls imprints the bow of promise. Thus having spoken words of comfort and assurance to the companions of his toil, having done every thing in his power for the promotion of the enterprise—with peace upon his brow, he passes from them like the orb of day into the chambers of the West : and then—“the night cometh :”—but it is a “night of stars.” The greater luminary has set, yet his “apostle lights” have caught the mantle that fell from him as he ascended, and ere the musket-shots of the minions of the tyrant

have passed through his body, there is a band of twenty thousand insurgents at the gates—led on by a woman!—

Yes! Freedom's battle once begun,
Bequeathed by bleeding sire to son,
Though baffled oft, is ever won.—

You may place what barriers ye will in the way of Truth and Liberty—ye cannot stop them. You may burn and slay and torture their votaries; you may drive them into the mountains; you may scatter their ashes to the winds and waters:—from grave and guillotine and gory block proceeds an influence that passes like electric fluid through the hearts of men and mocks your mad endeavour.

Truth is the equal sun,
Ripening no less the hemlock than the vine.
Truth is the flash that turns aside no more
From castle than from cot. Truth is a spear
Thrown by the blind. Truth is a Nemesis
Which leadeth her beloved by the hand
Through all things; giving him no task to break,
A bruised reed, but bidding him stand firm
Though she crush worlds.

Truth is the hidden treasure which a baffled and bewildered universe has been engaged in seeking for six thousand years. What is Truth? 'Tis a question which has been often asked: by the broken heart and the bleeding breast; by the dauntless spirit and the undimmed eye. It has been asked in the full triumph of faith, when the light of eternity illuminated the world-mysteries; it has gone up to heaven with the stifled sob from the

stricken spirit; it has been uttered to the silent forests by the lonely anchorite; it has been proclaimed in the majesty of hope, in the agony of despair, in the ghastly eloquence of death. Truth stands ever in still, silent beauty, like a star which recks not of the clouds which come and go and make wild warfare in the heavens. These shall pass away—the strife of tongues shall cease—the vain possessions and pursuits of earth shall vanish from their votaries—the workmen on the walls and battlements of this vast Babel-tower shall be arrested in their labour like the moon at Ajalon—the incubus shall be removed from the bosom of humanity, and the emancipated universe shall recognize their victim and their Conqueror—the solution of this world-enigma—the Everlasting Truth. But *then*, the end cometh. Meanwhile there must be agony and tears and death: there must be the faggot and the fire: there must be hollow-heartedness and mockery: for battle must be waged between the true and false till time shall be no more. There will be—

Dim echoings:

Not of the truth, but witnessing the truth—
Like the resounding thunder of the rock
Which the sea passes—rushing thoughts like heralds,
Voices which seem to clear the way for greatness,
Cry advent in the soul, like the far shoutings
That say a monarch comes. These must go by,
And then the man who can outwatch this vigil
Sees the apocalypse.

There is a hearty purpose and a solemn earnestness in The Roman which we think is calculated

to teach an admirable lesson to, and produce a powerful effect upon, the minds of the present age. Never perhaps was it more necessary to inculcate independent thought and self-reliance ; never more requisite to guard individuals against losing their identity in the mass ; never more needful to fix the image of Truth in the heart, and tend it day and night as the virgins watched the fire of Vesta. Our poet shows us the dignity of man—the power he can exercise, the active power of kindling great thoughts in his fellow-men—rousing them up from their lethargic sleep—snapping the fetters which cramp their spiritual freedom, and bidding them pursue the path which God has placed before them, and along which duty guides them—peradventure to a grave. He shows us also Man's passive power—the nobler of the two, and by far the more difficult to practice—the power which can impel the soul right onward, like an arrow to its mark ; which yields not to the sun-smile of fortune nor to the pitiless peltings of the tempest-cloud : the power from which the shafts of scorn fall off with deadened point ; which walks unscathed through the fiery furnace of a nation's mockery ; and gazes with an unblenched eye upon the ghastliest insignia of death. He shows us Pity bending with unutterable tenderness ; Love sacrificing self at the altar of its divinity ; Resolution stern as fate, sheathing the spirit as in a panoply of steel ; Hope, baffled, bleeding, but like the dolphin, beautiful in death ; Faith lifting its flashing eyes to Heaven and speaking forth the words of inspiration. He

takes us by the hand and conducts us reverently among the ruins of the past—he leads us within the circle of its magic presence and bids us look and wonder.

We must conclude as we commenced. What went ye out for to see? “The moral of all human tales”—the melancholy monument and memento of mortal grandeur and mortal vanity—the City of the dead, who erst was Queen of Nations—the Time-swept, but Time-conquering, Capitol—Imperial Rome.

All through the lorn
Vacuity winds came and went, but stirred
Only the flowers of yesterday. Upstood
The hoar unconscious walls, bisson and bare,
Like an old man, deaf, blind, and grey, in whom
The years of old stand in the sun, and murmur
Of childhood and the dead. From parapets
Where the sky rests, from broken niches—each
More than a Olympus,—for gods dwelt in them,—
Below from senatorial haunts and seats
Imperial, where the ever-passing fates
Wore out the stone, strange hermit birds croak'd forth
Sorrowful sounds, like watchers on the height
Crying the hours of ruin. When the clouds
Dressed every myrtle on the walls in mourning,
With calm prerogative the eternal pile
Impassive shone with the unearthly light
Of immortality. When conquering suns
Triumphed in jubilant earth, it stood out dark
With thoughts of ages: like some mighty captive
Upon his death-bed in a christian land,
And lying, through the chant of Psalm and Creed,
Unshrive[n] and stern, with peace upon his brow,
And on his lips strange gods.

Ashes to ashes—dust to dust: we will not disturb the majestic repose, nor break the silence

which broods above the princely sepulchre : but we will be—

Like some village children
Who found a dead king on a battle-field,
And with decorous care and reverent pity
Composed the lordly ruin, and sat down
Graver without tears.

THE END.

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Into the distant blue.'

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